

# Asthma Facts

▶ **Asthma continues to be a serious public health problem. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**

- ▶ An estimated 25.7 million people, including almost 7.1 million children, have asthma.<sup>1,2</sup>
  - ▶ Asthma prevalence is higher among persons with family income below the poverty level.
  - ▶ Almost 13 million people report having an asthma attack in the past year.<sup>3</sup>
  - ▶ Asthma accounts for over 15 million physician office and hospital outpatient department visits,<sup>4</sup> and nearly 2 million emergency department visits each year.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ **African Americans continue to have higher rates of asthma emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and deaths than do Caucasians:**
- ▶ The rate of emergency department visits is 330% higher.<sup>3</sup>
  - ▶ The hospitalization rate is 220% higher.<sup>3</sup>
  - ▶ The asthma death rate is 190% higher.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ **Approximately 3 million Hispanics in the U.S. have asthma and Puerto Ricans are disproportionately impacted:**
- ▶ The rate of asthma among Puerto Ricans is 113% higher than non-Hispanic white people and 50% higher than non-Hispanic black people.<sup>3</sup>
  - ▶ The prevalence of asthma attacks is highest among Puerto Ricans.<sup>3</sup>

▶ **Asthma in Children**

- ▶ Asthma is one of the most common serious chronic diseases of childhood.
- ▶ Asthma is the third-ranking cause of hospitalization among children under 15.<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ An average of one out of every 10 school-aged children has asthma.<sup>6</sup>
- ▶ 10.5 million school days are missed each year due to asthma.<sup>7</sup>

▶ **The Cost of Asthma**

The annual economic cost of asthma, including direct medical costs from hospital stays and indirect costs such as lost school and work days, amount to more than \$56 billion annually.<sup>8</sup>

▶ **Environmental Factors**

Indoor and outdoor environmental factors can trigger asthma attacks: dust mites, molds, cockroaches, pet dander, and secondhand smoke.

▶ **Asthma Can be Controlled**

With a plan that includes medical treatment and control of environmental triggers, people with asthma can lead healthy, active lives.

## References

1. National Center for Health Statistics Data Brief: Trends in Asthma Prevalence, Health Care Use, and Mortality: United States, 2001-2010

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2011, May). Asthma in the U.S. Vital Signs. Retrieved February 13, 2012, from <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/Asthma/>

3. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr032.pdf>

4. National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey: 2006 Summary, Table 12

5. DeFrances CJ, Cullen KA, Kozak LJ. National Hospital Discharge Society: 2005 Annual Summary with detailed Diagnosis and Procedure Data. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Statistics 12 (165); 2007

6. American Lung Association, Epidemiology and Statistics Unit, Research Program Services. Trends in Asthma Morbidity and Mortality. February 2010. <http://www.lungusa.org/finding-cures/our-research/trend-reports/asthma-trend-report.pdf>

7. Akinbami L. Asthma Prevalence, Health Care Use and Morality: United States 2005-2009. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr032.pdf>

8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2011, May). Asthma in the U.S. Vital Signs. Retrieved February 13, 2012, from <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/Asthma/>