

ASTHMA AND SECONDHAND SMOKE

Asthma is a common and costly disease. Secondhand smoke can trigger and worsen asthma attacks and symptoms in youth and adults. Appropriate disease management and avoidance of triggers can reduce the burden of asthma.

ASTHMA PREVALENCE

- Approximately **11%** of middle school students in Georgia have asthma
- Approximately **11%** of high school students in Georgia have asthma
- Approximately **9%** of adults in Georgia have asthma

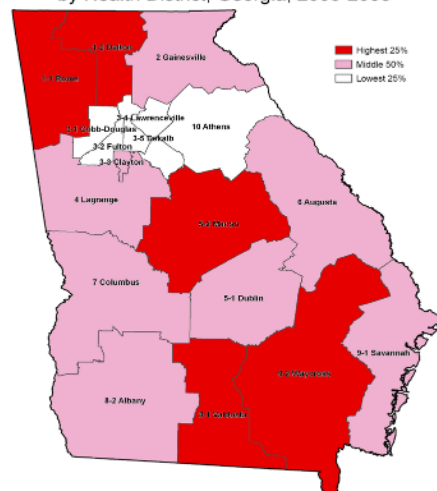
CIGARETTE SMOKING PREVALENCE

- Approximately 19,000 (**5%**) middle school students and 72,000 (**17%**) high school students currently smoke cigarettes
- Approximately 1.4 million (**20%**) adults in Georgia smoke cigarettes

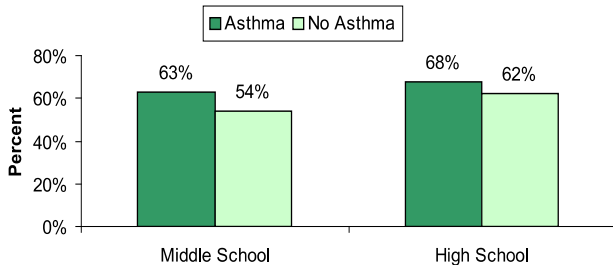
SECONDHAND SMOKE¹ EXPOSURE

- Approximately **57%** of middle school students and **64%** of high school students are exposed to secondhand smoke, regardless of asthma status
- Approximately **63%** of middle school students and **68%** of high school students with asthma are exposed to secondhand smoke

Percent of Adults Who Smoke Cigarettes by Health District, Georgia, 2005-2008



Percent of students exposed to secondhand smoke, by asthma status, Georgia, 2009

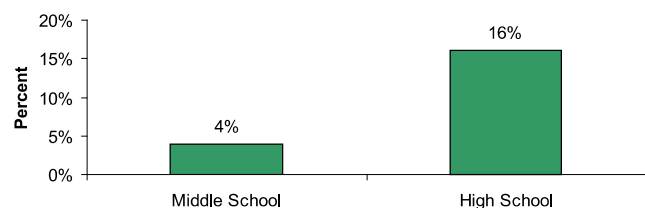


CIGARETTE SMOKING AND ASTHMA

- Approximately **4%** of middle school students with asthma and **16%** of high school students with asthma smoke cigarettes
- Approximately **17%** of adult Georgians with asthma smoke cigarettes

1. Secondhand smoke (SHS) is the combination of the smoke given off by the burning end of a cigarette, cigar, or pipe and the smoke exhaled by smokers.
2. Youth exposed to SHS in a room, or in a car, or by living with someone who smokes.

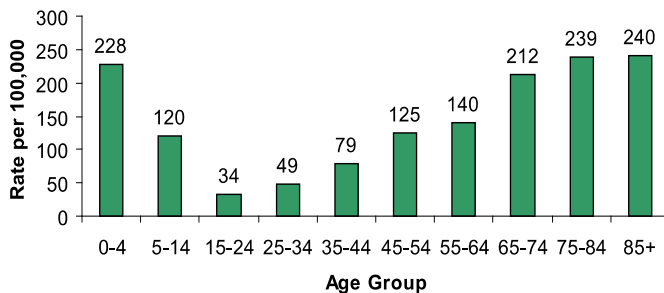
Percent of students with current asthma who smoke, Georgia, 2009



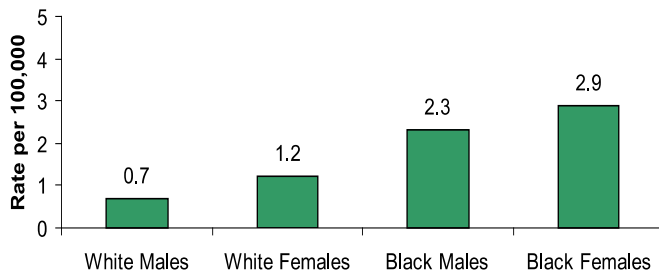
HEALTH BURDEN

- Over **54,000** visits to the emergency room and over **10,000** hospitalizations resulted from asthma in Georgia in 2007
- Hospitalization rates were **highest** among young children and older adults
- On average, from 2001 to 2007, there were **113** asthma deaths per year for all ages

Asthma hospitalizations by age group, Georgia, 2007



Asthma age-adjusted death rates, by race and sex, Georgia, 2001-2007



ASTHMA PREVENTION AND EXPOSURE TO TOBACCO SMOKE

- Despite the fact that smoking may trigger asthma attacks, youth and adults with asthma continue to smoke
- Exposure to secondhand smoke increases the frequency and severity of asthma attacks
- Stopping smoking and limiting exposure to secondhand smoke can help reduce the frequency and severity of asthma attacks

ASTHMA PREVENTION

Know the common triggers

Exposure to the following environmental irritants and allergens can cause an asthma attack:

- Tobacco smoke
- Dust mites
- Pets (animal dander)
- Cockroaches
- Fungi and molds (indoor and outdoor)

Take control of asthma

- Reduce exposure to your triggers
- Work with your doctor to create an asthma management plan
- Monitor your breathing and airways with a peak flow meter, as recommended by your doctor
- Treat symptoms early
- Learn when to seek medical help

Create an asthma management plan

An asthma management plan is a written guide set up by your doctor and you to help manage your asthma, based on your individual needs.

Your plan will tell you:

- What brings on your asthma symptoms
- How to avoid triggers and reduce exposure
- What medicines to take and when to take them
- When you need to seek medical help

Tips for using an asthma management plan:

- Go over each step of the plan with your doctor
- Understand instructions for medications
- Learn to use equipment, such as nebulizers, properly
- Schedule routine visits to discuss your asthma with your doctor
- Let your doctor know if your plan is not working, so that the plan can be revised as needed

Data sources:

1. 2008 Georgia Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) (<http://health.state.ga.us/epi/brfss/publications.asp>).
2. 2009 Georgia Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) (<http://health.state.ga.us/epi/cdiee/studenthealth.asp>).
3. 2009 Georgia Youth Tobacco Survey (<http://health.state.ga.us/epi/cdiee/tobaccouse.asp>).
4. 2007 Georgia Vital Statistics
5. 2007 Georgia Emergency Department and Hospital Inpatient Discharge Data