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

**SECONDHAND SMOKE\(^1\) 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

**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

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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.

**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

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\(^1\) Exposure to secondhand smoke is defined as spending 1 or more hours per day in a room where someone is smoking.
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 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:
4. 2007 Georgia Vital Statistics
5. 2007 Georgia Emergency Department and Hospital Inpatient Discharge Data

Visit http://www.health.state.ga.us/epi/cdige/asthma.asp for more information about asthma in Georgia.
Visit http://www.health.state.ga.us/epi/cdige/tobaccouse.asp for more information about tobacco use in Georgia.