

Asthma in Spokane County

introduction

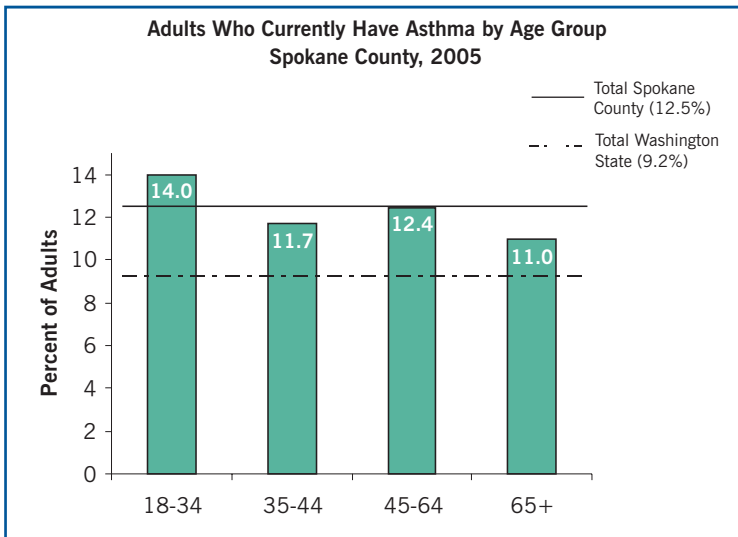
Asthma in children and adults has increased over the past 20 years, becoming a major public health concern in the United States. In 2003, approximately 20 million Americans had asthma, of which 6.2 million were children. If left unmanaged, asthma can be a life-threatening disease. With proper diagnosis, treatment, and management though, asthma can be controlled.

Adults

In 2005 among adults in Spokane County:¹

- **18.0%** reported ever being told they had asthma by a health care professional
- **12.5%** currently have asthma

The above percentages were similar for all adult age groups. Adult men and women were equally likely to currently have asthma in Spokane County. The 2005 percentages of adults ever diagnosed or currently with asthma in Spokane County were significantly higher than Washington State.



Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2005

Youth

Among household with children younger than 18 years:

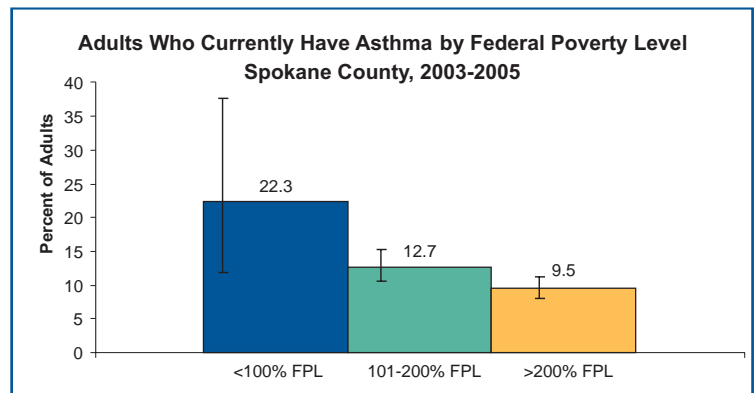
- **17.9%** reported one or more child had ever been told they had asthma
- **13.5%** reported one or more child currently had asthma

From the 2004 Healthy Youth Survey, 19.3% of adolescents had been told by a health care professional they had asthma.² Among those ever diagnosed, 53.8% reported they currently have asthma.

Environmental & Socioeconomic Factors

Several environmental and social factors are barriers to successful management of asthma. They reduce the availability, affordability, and effectiveness of asthma therapy. Some barriers include poverty, poor education, language and cultural differences, and environmental pollution.³ Common indoor allergens and irritants include secondhand smoke, dust mites, mold, cockroaches and other pests, household pets, and combustion byproducts.⁴

Among Spokane County adults who currently have asthma, 31.3% smoke cigarettes, 31.5% are obese, 18.6% are uninsured, and 15.8% put off seeing a doctor in the last year because of cost. These proportions were similar to those without asthma. The percent of the population who currently have asthma decreased as income level increased based on Federal Poverty Level (FPL).



Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2005

Cost and Health Care

Asthma is one of this country's most common and costly diseases.⁵

Nationally, asthma leads to nearly 2 million emergency room visits, which accounts for one-quarter of all emergency room visits.⁶ Emergency room visits comprised 12% of all visits to health care providers for asthma. The remainder sought care at physician offices (80%) and outpatient departments (8%).

Costs and Health Care cont...

The estimated cost of asthma is \$16.1 billion annually. Direct costs accounted for \$11.5 billion, which included hospital care (31%), physician services (25%), and prescription drugs (44%).⁶ Indirect costs, such as missed work, accounted for the remaining \$4.6 billion. Asthma accounted for an estimated 12.8 million missed school days and 24.5 million lost work days for adults.

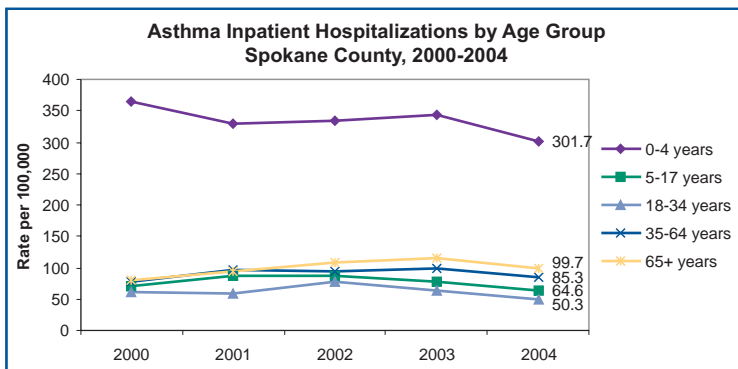
In 2004, Spokane County spent over \$20 million on inpatient hospitalizations for asthma. The average cost per stay was \$14,224.⁷

Cost of Hospitalizations for Asthma by Age Group, Spokane County, 2004		
Age Group	Total Charges	Average Charge per stay
Less than 18 years	\$1,988,554	\$7,619
18 - 64 years	\$7,053,053	\$14,106
65 years & older	\$11,200,351	\$19,166
All ages	\$20,241,958	\$14,224

Source: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, CHARS

Hospitalizations

Hospitalization rates for asthma are highest among children younger than five years.⁷ Their rate has consistently been three times higher than other age groups over the last five years.



Source: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, CHARS

In Spokane County, the rate for children younger than five years is higher than the Healthy People 2010 (HP 2010) goal of 250 per 100,000.⁸ Rates for the age groups 5-64 years and 65 years and older were slightly lower than the HP 2010 goals of 77 and 110 per 100,000, respectively.

Asthma Hospitalization by Age Group, Spokane County 2004 and Healthy People 2010 Goal (rates per 100,000)		
Age Group	Spokane County 2004	Healthy People 2010 Goal
0 - 4 years	302	250
5 - 64 years	71	77
65 years & older	100	110

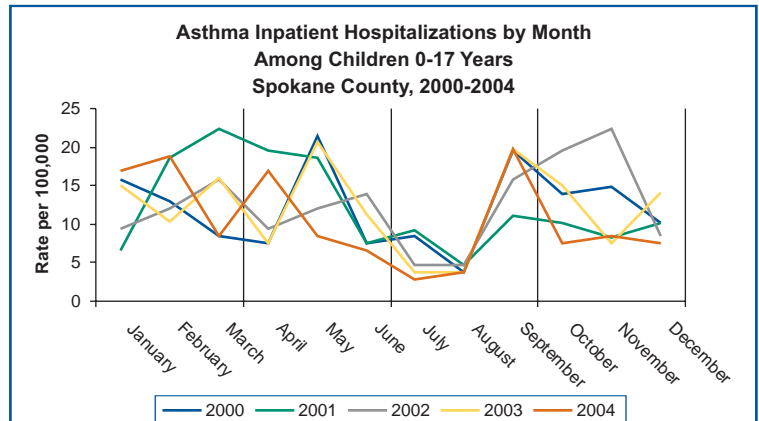
Source: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, CHARS
CDC and NIH, Health People 2010



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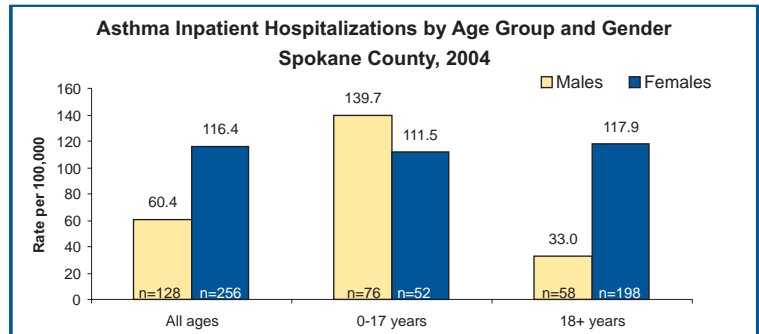
Hospitalizations continued...

Asthma hospitalization rates among children younger than 18 years fluctuate throughout the year. Historically, the rates are lowest during summer months.



Source: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, CHARS

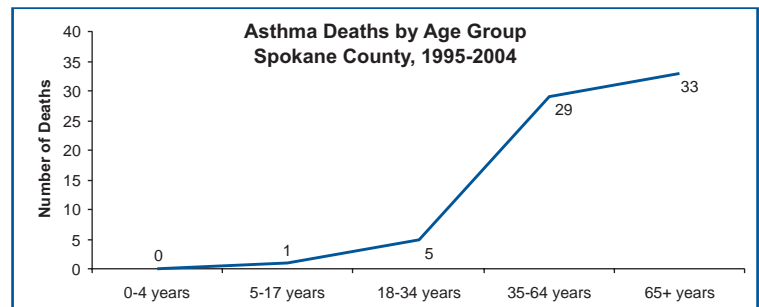
Differences in asthma hospitalization rates occur by gender and age. For all ages combined, females have a higher rate than males, also true for the subgroup, adults 18 years and older. However, among children younger than 18 years, males have a higher rate than females.



Source: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, CHARS

Mortality

Deaths from asthma are infrequent, but the incidence increases as the age group increases.⁹



Source: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics

Revised June 2006

¹Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, supported in part by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Cooperative Agreement U58/CCU0022819-01-2005

²Spokane Regional Health District, Healthy Youth Survey 2004

³BOUSQUET, Jean, BOUSQUET, Philippe J., GODARD, Philippe *et al.* The public health implications of asthma. *Bull World Health Organ*, July 2005, vol.83, no.7, p.548-554. ISSN 0042-9686.

⁴Environmental Protection Agency, www.epa.gov/iaq/asthma

⁵Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, www.aaa.org

⁶American Lung Association, *Trends in Asthma Morbidity and Mortality*, May 2005

⁷Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, Comprehensive Hospital Abstract Reporting System (CHARS)

⁸Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health, Healthy People 2010, www.healthypeople.gov

⁹Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, Vital Records