

Asthma is one of the major health conditions in the United States that impacts children and adults alike. Nearly 8% of the U.S. population has asthma, according to 2018 data from the National Health Interview Survey. Adult females ages 35 and over are nearly twice as likely to have asthma as males the same age. 7.3% of kids under age 15 have asthma, and non-Hispanic black children have asthma rates twice as high as the total population. For Americans over age 15, the prevalence of asthma is more evenly distributed, but non-Hispanic black Americans have slightly higher rates than other race/ethnic groups.

3,564 Americans died of asthma in 2017, and asthma and other chronic lower respiratory diseases were the fourth leading cause of death in the country the same year.

This week NCHS published a new report that documented asthma-related visits to doctors offices, using data from the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey. From 2001 to 2016, the rate of asthma visits to physician offices declined by nearly 25%. During 2012 to 2015 there were over 10 million asthma visits to physician offices, and primary care physicians attended to nearly two-thirds of patients at these visits. Non-Hispanic white people accounted for nearly two-thirds of all asthma visits, while children under age 15 accounted for a third of all visits. Bronchodilators were the most frequently mentioned medication, and were prescribed or administered at nearly 4 in 10 asthma-related visits.