# 2008 Georgia Data Summary:

# **ASTHMA**



An estimated 10% of children in Georgia have asthma. Among children with asthma, hospitalization rates are highest for those ages four and under.

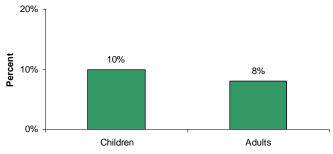
#### WHAT IS ASTHMA?

 Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disorder of the lungs and airways that causes recurrent episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and coughing.

# **ASTHMA PREVALENCE**

- Approximately 230,000 (10%) children in Georgia have asthma.
- Approximately 41,000 (11%) middle school students in Georgia have asthma.
- Approximately 44,000 (10%) high school students in Georgia have asthma.
- Approximately 524,000 (8%) adults in Georgia have asthma.
  - Asthma is more common among adult women (11%) than adult men (4%).
  - Adults with higher education and income are less likely to be affected by asthma than adults with lower education and income.

# Percentage of children and adults who have asthma, Georgia, 2007



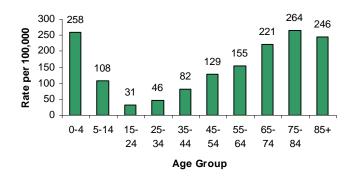
# **EMERGENCY ROOM (ER) VISITS**

- More than 49,000 ER visits for asthma occurred in Georgia in 2006.
- The overall age-adjusted rate of ER visits due to asthma was **516** per 100,000 persons in 2006.
- Children ages 0 to 4 have the highest rate for asthma-related ER visits; 1,328 per 100,000 persons.
- The rate of asthma-related ER visits decreases as age increases.
- ER charges related to asthma totaled over \$50 million.

### **HOSPITALIZATIONS**

- More than 10,000 hospitalizations for asthma occurred in Georgia in 2006.
- Asthma hospitalization rates were highest among young children and older adults.
- Blacks are twice as likely as whites to be hospitalized with asthma.
- Hospitalization charges related to asthma totaled more than \$124 million in 2006.

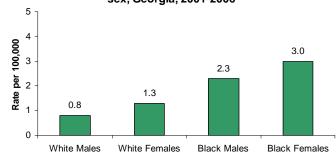
# Asthma hospitalizations by age group, Georgia, 2006



#### **DEATHS**

- On average, from 2001 to 2006 there were **116** asthma deaths per year.
- Blacks are 2.5 times more likely than whites to die from asthma.
- Women are **1.6** times more likely than men to die from asthma.
- Death rates from asthma increase with age.

# Asthma Age-Adjusted Death Rates, by race and sex, Georgia, 2001-2006



# **CHILDREN: Asthma Management and Training**

- 62% of children with asthma have had an asthma attack in the past year.
- 19% of children with asthma had to visit an emergency room or urgent care center because of their asthma in the past year.
- 59% of children with asthma were allowed to have asthma medicine at school.
- 52% of children with asthma having never been given an asthma action plan by a doctor or other health professional.
- 82% of children with asthma were taught by a doctor or health professional to recognize early signs of an asthma episode.
- 82% of children with asthma were taught by a doctor or health professional on what to do during an asthma attack.

### **ADULTS: Asthma Management**

- 59% of adults with asthma reported having had an episode of asthma or an asthma attack in the past year.
- 17% of adults with asthma reported having had to visit an emergency room or urgent care center because of their asthma in the past year.
- 35% of adults with asthma reported they were unable to work or carry out usual activities on one or more days.
- 20% of adults with asthma reported having no routine checkups for their asthma in the past year.
- 78% of adults with asthma reported having never been given an asthma action plan by a doctor or other health professional.
- 60% of adults with asthma reported having been taught by a doctor or health professional to recognize early signs of an asthma attack.
- 71% of adults with asthma reported having been taught by a doctor or health profession on what to do during an asthma attack.

# **ASTHMA PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT**

### 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. 2007 Georgia Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
- 2. 2007 Georgia Youth Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (http://health.state.ga.us/epi/cdiee/tobaccouse.asp).
- 3. Georgia Vital Statistics, 2006
- 4. Georgia Emergency Department and Hospital Inpatient Discharge Data, 2006
- 5. 2006-07 Georgia Child Asthma Callback Survey
- 6. 2006-07 Georgia Adult Asthma Callback Survey

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Visit http://www.health.state.ga.us/epi/cdiee/asthma.asp for more information about asthma in Georgia.