

ASTHMA MORTALITY IN PENNSYLVANIA

WHAT IS ASTHMA?

Asthma is a chronic disease of the lungs characterized by wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and coughing at night or early in the morning. The cause of asthma is not clear, but several triggers have been associated with asthma. A combination of both genetic and environmental factors may predispose an individual to asthma. Asthma triggers include pollen, animal dander, mold, cockroaches, dust mites, tobacco smoke, physical activity, certain foods and medication. Asthma has no cure; however, its effective management has been shown to reduce the severity of symptoms. Deaths due to asthma are a rare occurrence but do occur. An estimated 255,000 people worldwide die from asthma annually. In the U.S, an estimated nine deaths occur daily. This is of serious concern because asthma deaths can be prevented through asthma education, proper management and control.

ASTHMA MORTALITY IN PENNSYLVANIA, 2012

In 2012, there were 145 deaths due to asthma as the underlying cause, which represents 1.0 death per 100,000.

The total number of deaths and age-adjusted mortality rates in Pennsylvania increased from 2010 to 2012. In 2010, there were 126 deaths due to asthma. In 2011, there were 129 deaths and in 2012, there were 145 deaths due to asthma.

In 2012, of the 145 deaths due to asthma, 51 were males and 94 were females.

Females had a higher proportion of deaths due to asthma compared to males (65 percent vs 35 percent).

Disparities in asthma death rates were observed with blacks having higher death rates than whites and females having higher death rates than males.

Death rates per 100,000 Pennsylvania residents in 2012 by sex were: female: 1.1/100,000 and male: 0.8 /100,000.

Death rates per 100,000 Pennsylvania residents in 2012 by race were: black: 2.0/100,000 and white: 0.8 /100,000.

Death rates per 100,000 residents from 2010-2012 increased with age, with the highest number of deaths occurring in persons 85 years and older. Mortality rates per 100,000 in persons ages 85 and older (8.6/100,000) were approximately two times the rate observed in individuals in age group 80-84(4.0/100,000).

Data source: Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Health Statistics and Research
For more information regarding this information, please contact the Asthma Control Program, Pennsylvania Department of Health

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