



# ASTHMA IN WISCONSIN

## ASTHMA FACTS AND FIGURES - 2009

### DANE COUNTY ASTHMA COALITION

#### WHAT IS ASTHMA?

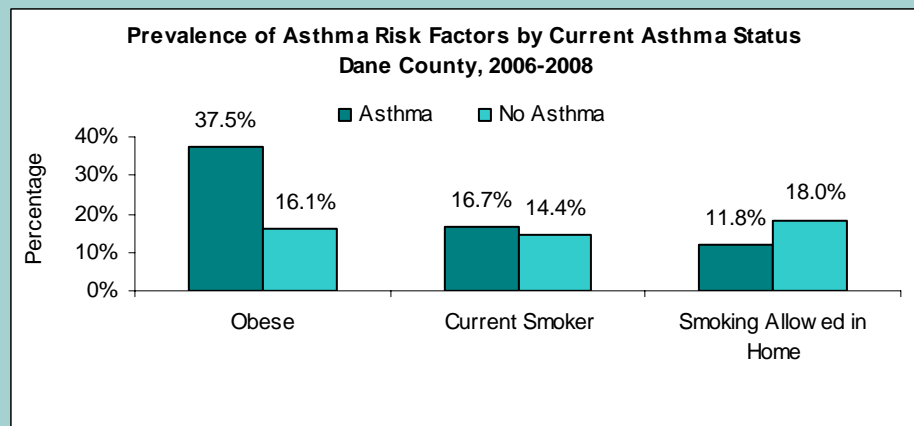
- Asthma causes the airways of the lungs to tighten and swell
- Symptoms include shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing and chest tightness
- Asthma cannot be cured, but it can be controlled
- Symptoms can range from mild to life threatening

#### WHAT CAUSES ASTHMA?

Asthma attacks happen when triggers make the airways to the lungs irritated and inflamed. Common triggers include:

- Environmental tobacco smoke
- Molds
- Pets
- Nitrogen Dioxide
- Work-related exposures (such as animal dander, flour, latex and certain chemicals like ammonia and chlorine)
- Dust mites
- Outdoor air pollution
- Cockroaches

#### RISK FACTORS FOR ASTHMA



Adults with current asthma, compared to those without asthma, in the Dane County area are:

- More likely to be obese
- Slightly more likely to smoke
- Less likely to allow smoking in their home

#### MANAGING YOUR ASTHMA

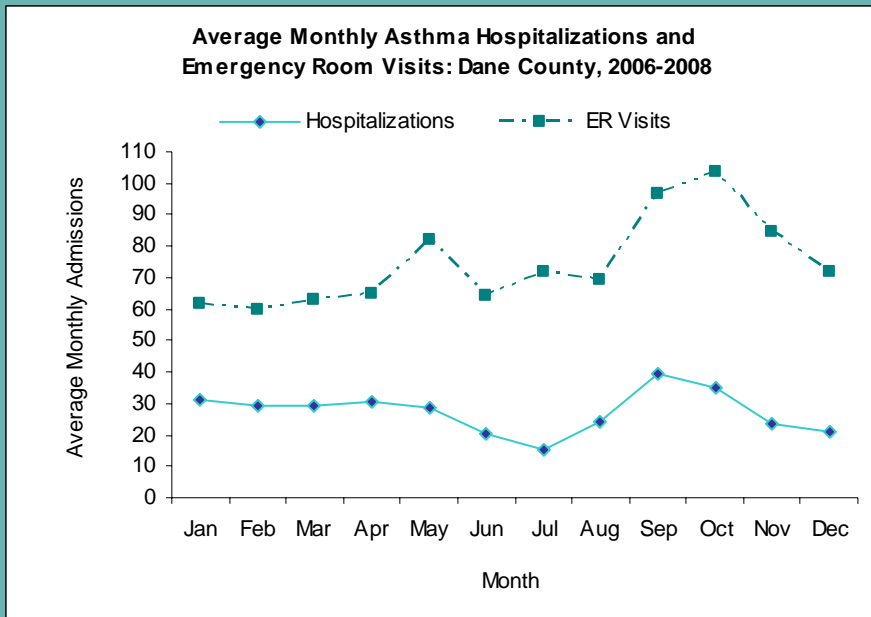
Hospitalizations and emergency room visits can be avoided by taking measures to control your asthma. Ways to control asthma include:

- Identify, avoid, and remove asthma triggers at home, at work and at school
- Use an individualized asthma action plan to control asthma. Doctors, families and children should work together to create a plan based on individual triggers, medications and warning signs
- Take asthma medication as prescribed
- Get a flu shot
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Educate teachers, employers, administrators and policy makers about asthma

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## SEASONALITY OF ASTHMA

In Wisconsin, asthma admissions are usually the highest in the early spring and fall. Factors thought to contribute to these seasonal peaks include increased infections and high pollen and/or fungal counts.



## ALL PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA SHOULD RECEIVE A SEASONAL FLU VACCINATION

66.6% of adults with current asthma in the Dane County area had a flu shot in the last year.

***Anyone with asthma over the age of 6 months should get a flu shot every year according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).***

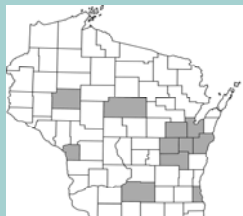
Adults with asthma are at high risk of developing complications after contracting the influenza virus, yet most adults with asthma do not receive an annual flu vaccination. The flu may not only make your asthma worse, but it may also cause you to make a visit to the ER, end up in the hospital or worse. Getting a flu shot may prevent all of these complications. The flu vaccine is safe and effective. All people who have asthma should be encouraged to get the flu vaccination as part of their routine care.



The Wisconsin Asthma Coalition's (WAC) mission is to develop and implement a sustainable statewide action plan that expands and improves the quality of asthma education, prevention, management, and services and eliminates the disproportionate burden of asthma in racial/ethnic and low-income populations.

### LOCAL ASTHMA COALITIONS

- Chippewa County Asthma Coalition
- Community Asthma Network
- Dane County Asthma Coalition
- Fight Asthma Milwaukee Allies
- Fond du Lac Asthma Management Coalition
- Fox Valley Asthma Coalition
- Green Bay Area Asthma Coalition
- La Crosse Partners
- Manitowoc County Asthma Coalition
- Marathon County Asthma Coalition



To become a WAC member, go to [www.chawisconsin.org/wac.htm](http://www.chawisconsin.org/wac.htm)



To visit the DHS asthma website, go to:

<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/eh/Asthma/index.htm>

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