

ASTHMA IN VILAS COUNTY

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 AN ASTHMA ATTACK?

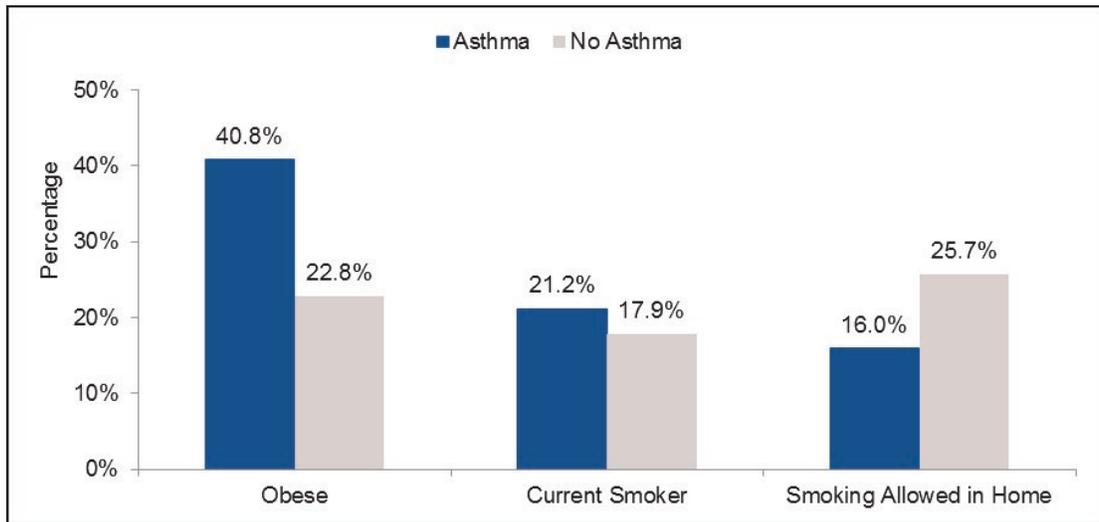
Asthma attacks happen when triggers make the airways to the lungs irritated and inflamed.

COMMON ASTHMA TRIGGERS:

- Respiratory infections (colds/flu)
- Allergies to animals with fur, molds, cockroaches, dust mites and pollen from trees, grass and weeds
- Cold weather
- Exercise
- Things in the air that can irritate your lungs like any kind of smoke, perfumes, scented candles and air fresheners
- Strong emotions

RISK FACTORS FOR ASTHMA

Prevalence of Asthma Risk Factors by Current Asthma Status, Vilas and Surrounding Counties* 2008-2010



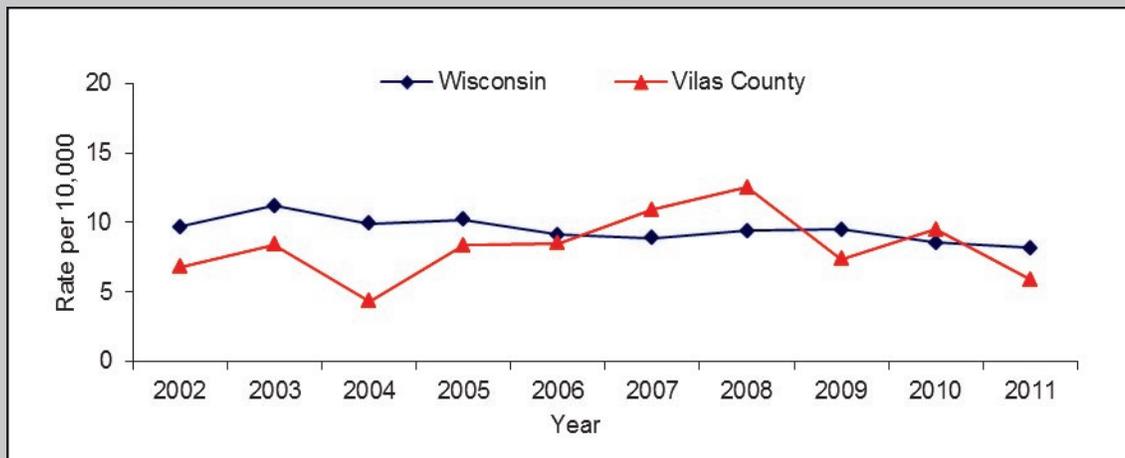
*Counties include: Vilas, Iron, Oneida, and Forest

Adults with current asthma, compared to those without asthma, in Vilas and surrounding counties are:

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

19 percent of adults in Vilas and surrounding counties smoke

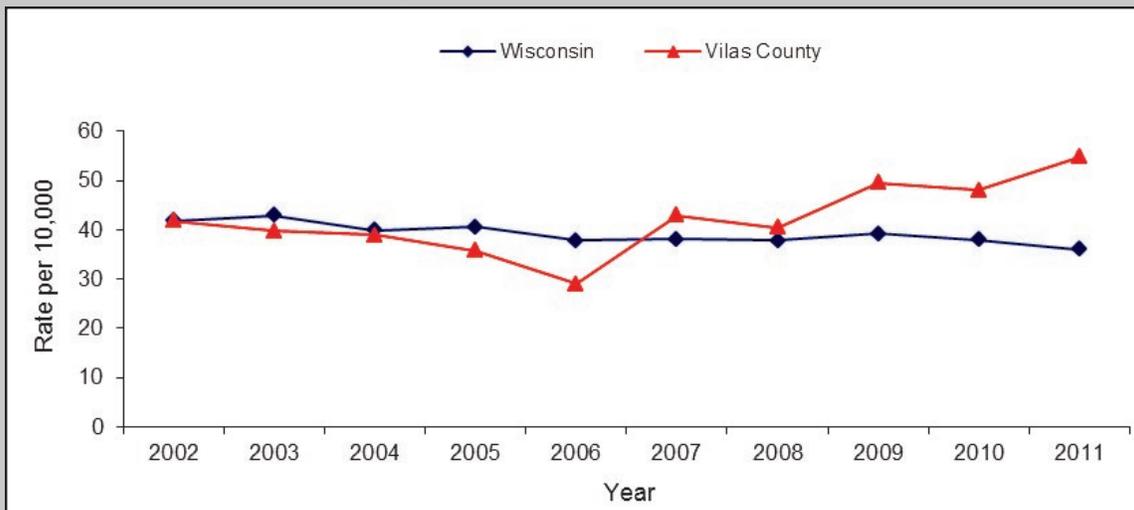
Asthma Hospitalization Rates, Vilas County and Wisconsin Overall, 2002-2011



Over the past decade, the asthma hospitalization rates in Vilas County fluctuated slightly but were not significantly different from the overall state rates (with the exception of 2004).

VILAS COUNTY ASTHMA CONT.

Asthma Emergency Department (ED) Visit Rates By Year, Vilas County and Wisconsin Overall 2002-2011



Between 2002 and 2006, Vilas County had slightly lower asthma ED visit rates than the overall state. From 2007 on, ED visit rates steadily increased and are currently significantly higher than the overall state rate.

SEASONALITY

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

ALL PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA SHOULD RECEIVE A FLU VACCINE

46% of adults with current asthma in the Vilas County area had a flu shot in 2009-2011.

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 Coalition
 Fox Valley Asthma Coalition
 Kenosha-Racine Asthma Coalition
 La Crosse Partners
 Marathon County Asthma Coalition
 Trempealeau County Asthma Coalition

For more information or to become a WAC member, go to:
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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