

# ASTHMA IN AUSTRALIA



## 1 IN 9

### AUSTRALIANS REPORT HAVING ASTHMA

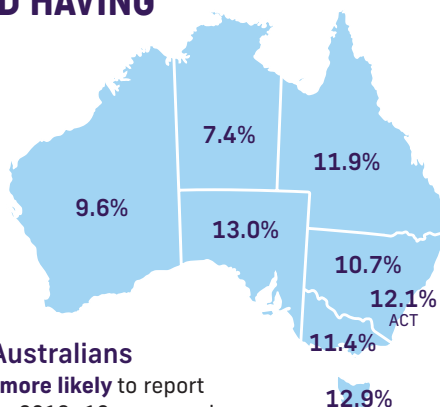
2.7 million people<sup>1,2</sup>

## 11.2%

### OF AUSTRALIANS REPORTED HAVING ASTHMA

(2017–18)<sup>2</sup>

Persons (%)  
State/Territory



Indigenous Australians were **1.6 times more likely** to report having asthma in 2018–19 compared with non-Indigenous Australians<sup>3</sup>

## HOSPITALISATIONS



On average, about

## 39,000

Australians were hospitalised each year for asthma (2016–17 to 2018–19)<sup>4</sup>

More than **80%** of asthma hospitalisations were potentially preventable<sup>4,5</sup>

Over **40%** of asthma hospitalisations were in children aged 0–14<sup>4</sup>

## QUALITY OF LIFE<sup>3</sup>



People with asthma are less likely to report excellent health, and more likely to report fair or poor health, than people without the condition



- 273 females
- 143 males
- 8 unknown

## 424

### AUSTRALIANS DIE FROM ASTHMA EVERY YEAR, ON AVERAGE

(2017–19)<sup>6</sup>

Mortality rates are higher for:<sup>3</sup>

- People living in remote areas
- People living in areas of lower socio-economic status
- Indigenous Australians

## IMPACT OF PANDEMIC MEASURES ON ASTHMA OUTCOMES



### Fewer asthma hospitalisations

(about 25,000 in 2020–21)<sup>4</sup>



This is likely due to COVID-19 protection measures leading to:<sup>7,8</sup>

- Fewer respiratory infections (cold and flu)
- Less outdoor pollution
- Better hand-hygiene, mask wearing and social distancing
- Access to telehealth, avoiding hospital visits



### Fewer deaths due to asthma

(351 deaths in 2021)<sup>6</sup>

People with uncontrolled or severe asthma are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 illness.<sup>9,10</sup> We recommend that people with asthma stay up-to-date with their asthma management, COVID-19 vaccination and protective measures.



## ONLY 1 IN 3

### people with asthma have an Asthma Action Plan<sup>1</sup>

People aged 15 years and over are less likely to have an Asthma Action Plan

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020–21). Asthma [Internet]. Canberra: ABS. 2. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017–18). National Health Survey: First results [Internet]. Canberra: ABS. 3. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2020). Asthma [Internet]. Canberra: AIHW. 4. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Principal diagnosis data cubes. Separation statistics by principal diagnosis, 2020–21, 2019–20, 2018–19, 2017–18, 2016–17. Canberra: AIHW. 5. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Admitted patient care 2020–21, 2019–20, 2018–19, 2017–18, 2016–17. Canberra: AIHW. 6. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Causes of Death, Australia [Internet]. 2021, 2019, 2018, 2017. Canberra: ABS. 7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022). Chronic respiratory conditions [Internet]. Canberra: AIHW. 8. Homaira N, et al. Allergy Asthma Clin Immunol. 2022 Jun 16;18(1):53. doi: 10.1186/s13223-022-00691-1. 9. National Asthma Council Australia (2023). Australian Asthma Handbook. COVID-19. <https://www.asthmahandbook.org.au/management/covid-19-2> 10. Global Initiative for Asthma (2022). Interim guidance about COVID-19 and asthma [Internet]. Updated 30 April 2022.