

Asthma Australia’s Climate and Health Survey

Summary of Results August 2023

Asthma Australia undertook this survey to explore knowledge and attitudes about climate change and health. It was disseminated via an online panel service in August. Respondent quotas were in place to reach a nationally representative sample by state/territory, age and gender. It was completed by 2,022 people.

The National Climate and Health Strategy

Most people (70%) think governments should protect people vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change. People more likely to think this include:



People with asthma (75%) compared to people without (69%)



People with any chronic condition (74%) compared to people without (63%)



People who have experienced a recent climate-related disaster or extreme weather (84%) compared to those who haven’t (61%)

The objective most people want to see the new National Climate and Health Strategy address is “Protecting the health and wellbeing of Australians against the impacts of climate change.” This was followed by “Ensuring different areas of government are working together to reduce climate change impacts on health and wellbeing.”

Ranked Strategy Objectives

(Percentage of respondents ranking objectives in top three)

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 1 | Protecting the health and wellbeing of Australians against the impacts of climate change (55%) |
| 2 | Ensuring different areas of government are working together to reduce climate change impacts on health and wellbeing (50%) |
| 3 | Supporting the healthcare system to respond to climate change health challenges (41%) |
| 4 | Supporting vulnerable individuals to respond to health challenges linked to climate change (37%) |
| 5 | Coordinating government responses to climate change impacts (36%) |
| 6 | Supporting communities to respond to health challenges linked to climate change (35%) |
| 7 | Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the healthcare system (26%) |
| 8 | Measuring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions from the healthcare system (21%) |

Climate Change Concerns

Most people (88%) are concerned about at least one impact of climate change, this is higher for people with asthma (91%). Three in five people are concerned about more frequent and severe natural disasters (63%), economic impacts (62%) and health and wellbeing impacts (60%).

People more likely to be concerned about the **health and wellbeing impacts** of climate change include:



People with asthma (67%) compared to people without (59%)

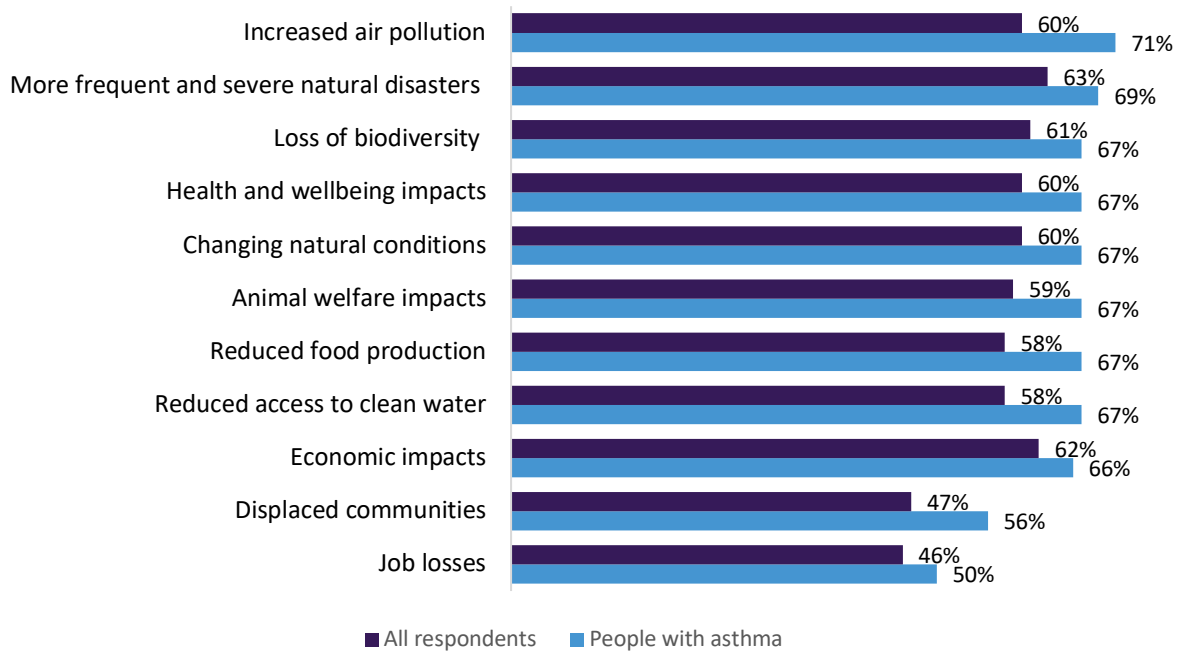


People with any chronic condition (64%) compared to people without (54%)



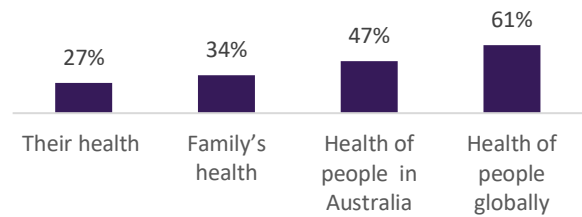
People who have experienced a recent climate-related disaster or extreme weather (70%) compared to those who haven’t (54%)

Percentage of people concerned about climate change impacts

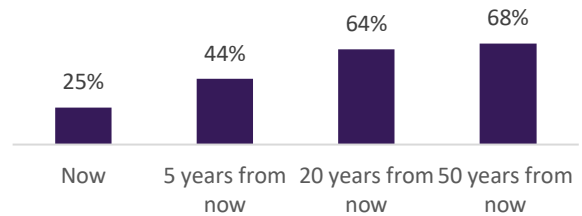


Climate Change Risk Perception




Most people believe climate change is a **significant risk** to the health of people globally (61%). In contrast, fewer people perceive climate change as a significant risk to their own health, their family's health or the health of people in Australia.






Most people perceive climate change to be a **significant risk** to people in Australia in 20 or 50 years. However, a substantial minority believe climate change is posing a significant risk to health in Australia now or 5 years from now.



People more likely to perceive climate change as a significant risk **to their health** include:

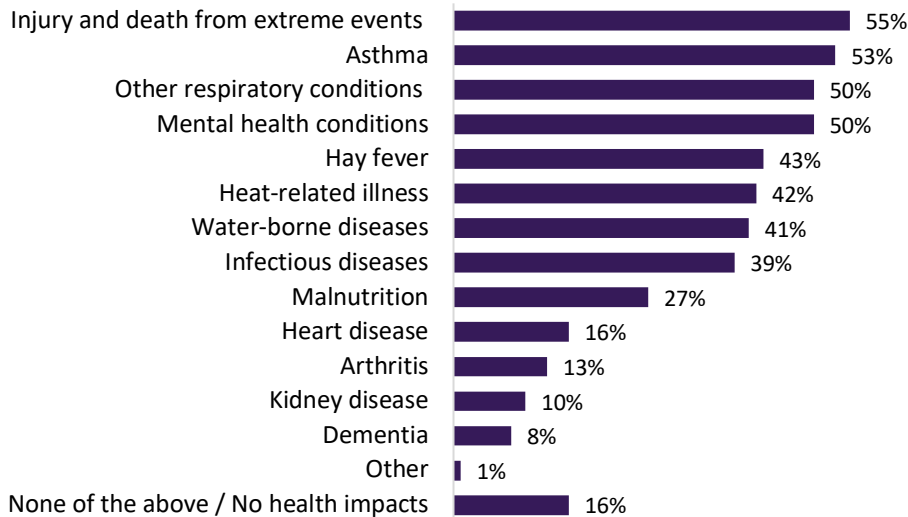
		
People with asthma (40%) compared to people without (25%)	People with any chronic condition (33%) compared to people without (18%)	People who have experienced a recent climate-related disaster or extreme weather (37%) compared to those who haven't (22%)

People more likely to perceive climate change as a significant risk to the health of **people in Australia now** include:

		
People with asthma (33%) compared to people without (24%)	People with any chronic condition (29%) compared to people without (19%)	People who have experienced a recent climate-related disaster or extreme weather (36%) compared to those who haven't (19%)

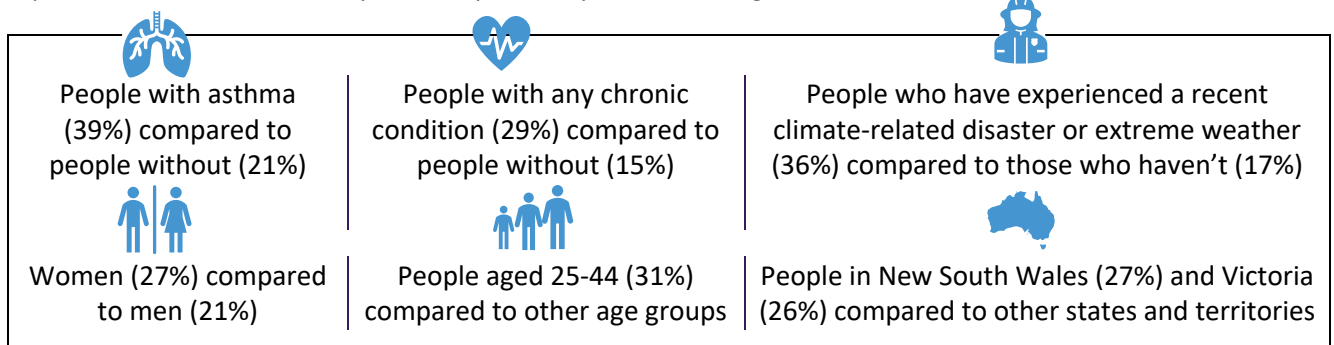
Climate Change Health Impacts

There is generally low awareness of health conditions that can be caused or worsened by climate change impacts. The highest awareness is for injury and death from extreme events (55%) and asthma (53%). Half of people are aware that climate change can cause or exacerbate other respiratory conditions or mental health conditions. However, there is a very poor understanding of the potential for climate change to cause or worsen other chronic disease outcomes including heart (16%) or kidney disease (10%).

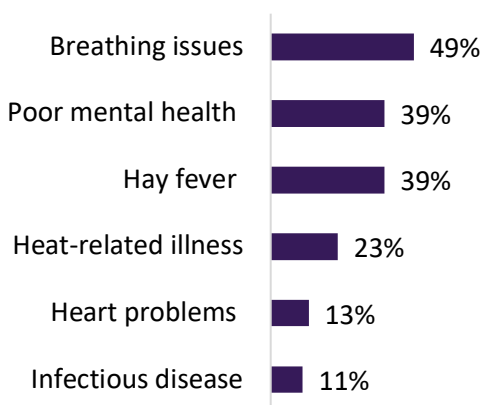


People with asthma are more likely to recognise climate change can cause or worsen asthma (73%) than those without (48%)

One quarter of people say climate change has already had an impact on their health. People more likely to report their health has already been impacted by climate change include:



Among those who report they have already experienced health impacts because of climate change, breathing issues was the most commonly reported impact.



"I do get anxious and the cost of living pressures as a result of climate issues."

"Climate change has impacted my health by being diagnosed with asthma."

"Warmer weather making it harder to sleep and smoke from fires causing respiratory problems."

"My asthma has definitely got worse since the weather changes. It seems harder to breathe, in general."