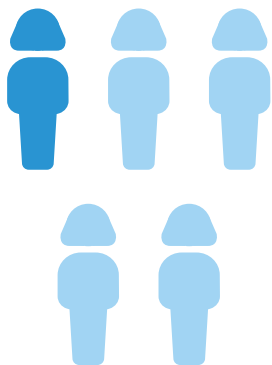


ASTHMA IS A WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUE



20%

OF ADULT AUSTRALIAN WOMEN REPORTED HAVING ASTHMA IN 2024¹

HOSPITALISATIONS IN 2024-25



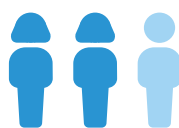
ABOUT

17,000

hospitalisations in people 20 years and over were due to asthma²

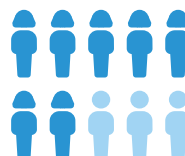
There were over **TWICE** as many hospitalisations in women aged 20 and over as in men the same age

Women accounted for:



2 in 3

(69%) hospitalisations in people 20-29 years



7 in 10

(71%) hospitalisations in people 30-69 years



3 in 4

(74%) hospitalisations in people 70 and over

LIFE COURSE BURDEN

CHILDHOOD / ADOLESCENCE

ASTHMA WAS THE **1st LEADING CAUSE**

OF DISEASE BURDEN IN 2024 FOR SCHOOL-AGE GIRLS aged 5-14 years⁸



1st

leading cause for young girls aged 1-4 years³

8th

leading cause for all ages combined³

OLDER WOMEN



322
females



156
males

2X

more girls or women died from asthma than boys or men



Half (50%) of asthma deaths were in women aged 75 years and over⁵

ADULT & PEAK WORKING YEARS

The proportion of Australians having asthma in 2022 was:

Nearly **TWO THIRDS (61%)**

higher in women than men aged **35-44 years**⁶

Over **THREE QUARTERS (78%)**

higher in women than men aged **55-64 years**⁶

Asthma was the **4th LEADING CAUSE OF DISEASE BURDEN IN 2024 FOR WOMEN** aged 35-44 years³



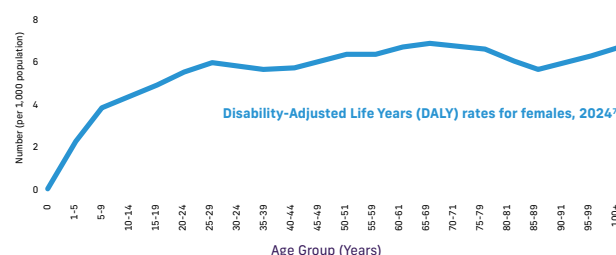
5th LEADING CAUSE

for women aged 20-24 years

6th LEADING CAUSE

for women aged 25-34 years

The **burden of disease** caused by asthma increases during childhood and **remains high during all stages of adulthood**



HIDDEN BURDEN¹

PSYCHOLOGICAL BURDEN



53% vs 41%

high/very high psychological distress in women with vs without asthma



72% vs 61%

moderate-severe anxiety/depression in women with vs without asthma



37% vs 26%

women with vs without asthma rate their health as **fair or poor**

CARE GAPS



Only **66%**

of women treating their asthma use anti-inflammatory inhalers



Only **34%**

have an asthma action plan



35%

purchased their reliever mainly over-the-counter (without a prescription)

POLICY FOCUS AREAS



Respiratory health should be built into existing **women's health assessment pathways**



The Ministerial Expert Panel on Women's Health must examine asthma as a **distinct women's health issue**



Asthma must be named explicitly within **women's health policy**

References:

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4. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). *Causes of Death, Australia, data cubes 2024* [cited 2025 Nov 14]. www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/causes-death/causes-death-australia/2024
5. National Asthma Council Australia. *Asthma Mortality Statistics 2024* [cited 2025 Nov 25]. www.nationalasthma.org.au
6. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). *Asthma* [cited 2026 Feb 3]. www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/health-conditions-and-risks/asthma/latest-release
7. Based on AIHW material, Australian Burden of Disease Study 2024, Figure 3.5 [cited 2026 Feb 4]. www.aihw.gov.au/reports/burden-of-disease/australian-burden-of-disease-study-2024/contents/interactive-data-on-disease-burden/disease-injury-specific-summary, used under license CC-BY 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>
8. AIHW. Health of Children [cited 2026 Aug 18]. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/children-youth/health-of-children>



**ASTHMA
AUSTRALIA**