



Asthma Among American Indians in Minnesota

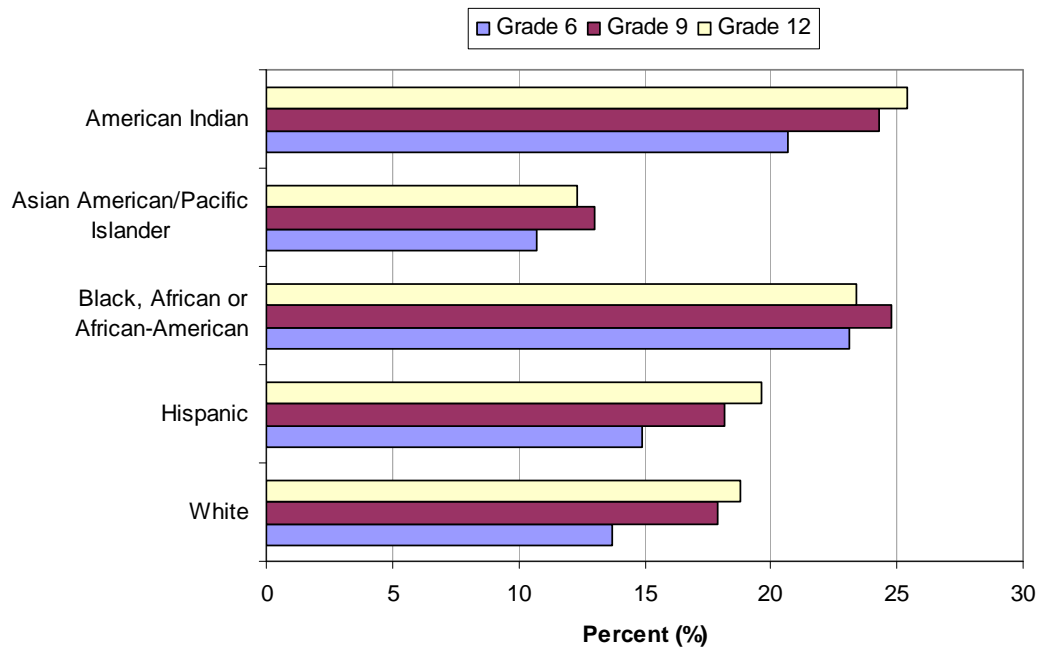
The Minnesota Department of Health Asthma Program tracks different aspects of asthma (e.g., the percentage of Minnesota residents with asthma, rates of asthma-related hospitalizations and emergency department visits) to better understand the burden of asthma in Minnesota. Currently there is no information on the percentage of American Indians in Minnesota who have asthma, or statistics that could be used to describe the burden of asthma in this group. However, there are indications that the burden may be high based on data from the Minnesota Student Survey, the Minnesota Department of Human Services, and other sources.

What We Know:

Minnesota Student Survey

Data from the 2007 Minnesota Student Survey show that American Indian students in grade 12 are more likely than other students to have ever been diagnosed with asthma.

Percentage (%) of students reporting “Yes” to “Has a doctor or nurse ever told you that you have asthma?” by grade and race/ethnicity



	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
American Indian	20.7	24.3	25.4
Asian American/Pacific Islander	10.7	13.0	12.3
Black, African or African-American	23.1	24.8	23.4
Hispanic	14.9	18.2	19.6
White	13.7	17.9	18.8

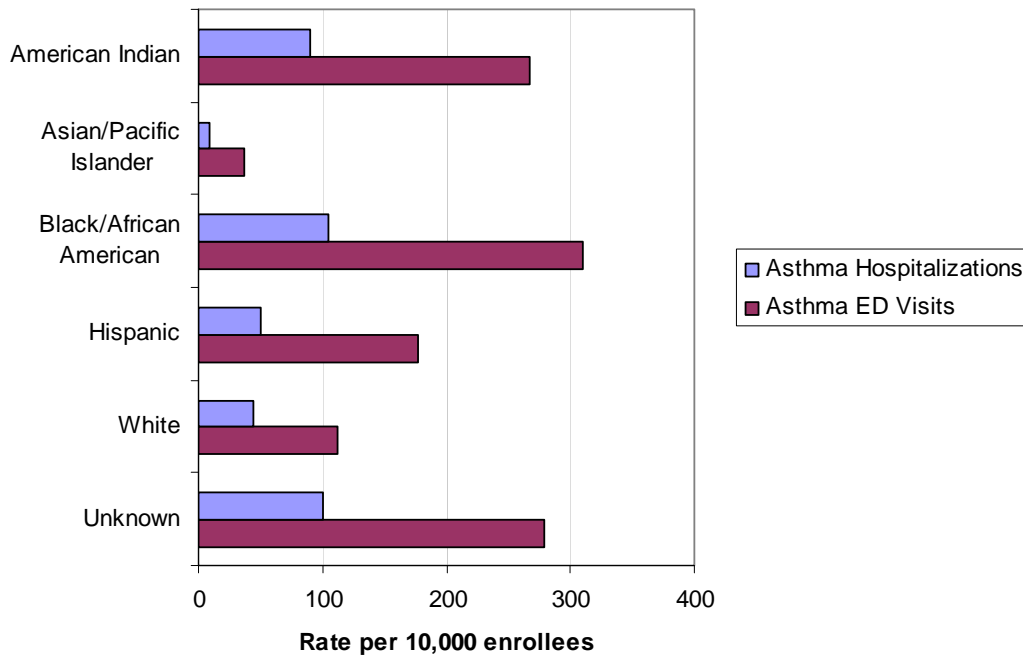
Source: Minnesota Student Survey, 2007

Minnesota Health Care Programs

Among enrollees in Minnesota’s Medical Assistance program for families and children (managed care), 6.2% of American Indians had persistent asthma compared with 1.8% of Asians, 6.9% of Blacks, 4.4% of Hispanics and 5.2% of Whites. Among enrollees in the MinnesotaCare program, the prevalence of persistent asthma was highest among American Indians (6.9%) compared with Asians (2.8%), Blacks (6.0%), Hispanics (4.8%) and Whites (4.8%). (Note: See MDH Asthma Program report, “Asthma Among Minnesota Health Care Program Enrollees, 2009” for definition of persistent asthma.)

Rates of asthma-related emergency department (ED) visits and hospitalizations among American Indians enrolled in Medical Assistance for families and children (managed care) are high. See graph below.

Asthma-Related Hospitalizations and Emergency Department Visits Among Enrollees in Medical Assistance for Families & Children, 2007



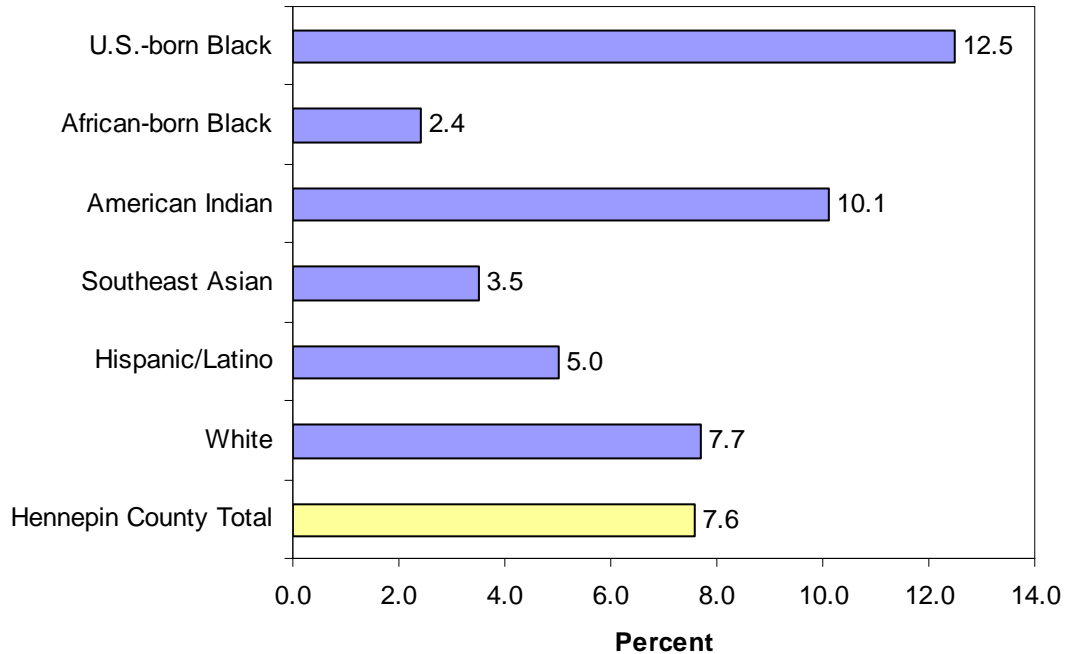
Source: Minnesota Department of Human Services

American Lung Association HUD Healthy Homes Project

Some key asthma data come from the three Minnesota tribes that participated in the 2006-2009 HUD Healthy Homes grant awarded to the American Lung Association of Minnesota (ALAMN). In assembling data for their grant application, ALAMN discovered that 10-21% of the members of two of the participating tribes; and about 25% of children of the third have asthma. Recent data from the project indicate that as many as 48% of children seeking care at a tribal clinic may have asthma.

Hennepin County Survey of the Health of All Population and the Environment (SHAPE)
Data from the 2002 SHAPE survey show that in Hennepin County the percentage of American Indian adults with asthma is higher than for all other groups except U.S.-born Blacks.

Current Asthma Prevalence Among Adults by Race/Ethnicity, Hennepin County, 2002



Source: Hennepin County SHAPE, 2002

Next Steps

The Minnesota Department of Health Asthma Program and Project AIR are currently working with the Bemidji Area Office of the Indian Health Service (IHS) to obtain statistics related to asthma from the IHS DataMart. We will gather this information for the purpose of developing an Asthma Profile that will describe the burden of asthma among American Indians living in Minnesota (who are active users of tribal health care systems). The Profile will contain information on the percentage of American Indians with asthma by age group, sex, and region of the state, as well as measures of the burden of asthma (e.g., asthma hospitalization rates). The Profile will also show trends in asthma over time. This information can be used to identify areas or groups with higher rates of asthma, evaluate the impact of public health programs, and plan future programs. Note that the Bemidji Area Office will not release to MDH any data that could be used to identify individuals or tribes.

For more information on Minnesota asthma data, please contact: Wendy Brunner, 651-201-5895, wendy.brunner@state.mn.us.

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