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Asthma Prevalence In New York State, 2002-2003

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Objective: To generate lifetime and current asthma prevalence estimates in children and adults overall and by sociodemographic characteristics using the NAS/NYS data.

Methods: Descriptive analysis was performed to present lifetime and current asthma prevalence in children and adults and by selected sociodemographic characteristics. The SURVEYFREQ procedure was used to generate weighted prevalence and 95% confidence intervals. All estimates were produced by weighted analyses using SAS 9.1.

Results: A total of 31,090 interviews were completed for asthma screening. Lifetime asthma prevalence in children and adults was 10.6% and 10.3%, respectively. Individuals aged 18-24 had both the highest lifetime (16.2%) and current asthma prevalence (9.8%). The lifetime asthma prevalence was higher for male children (12.5%) than female children (8.6%). However, it was higher for female adults (11.8%) than male adults (8.7%). Blacks and Hispanics had both the highest lifetime and current asthma prevalence. Children from families with highest level of household education lower than high school had the highest lifetime (11.9%) and current asthma prevalence (9.4%). Adults with an education level lower than high school had the highest lifetime (9.7%) and current asthma prevalence (9.1%). Obese children and adults had lifetime asthma prevalence at 12.9% and 15.2%, respectively.

Conclusions: The prevalence of asthma was higher for male children, female adults, individuals who were Black, Hispanic, obese, from families at or below the federal poverty level, or from families with a lower household educational level. Interventions which target these higher risk populations are needed to reduce the burden of asthma in NYS.