Asthma in Erie County and Ohio

What is asthma?

Asthma is a chronic disease that affects the airways in the lungs. During an asthma attack, airways become inflamed, making it hard to breathe. Asthma attacks can be mild, moderate, or serious — and even life threatening.

Symptoms of an asthma attack include:

- Coughing
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Wheezing
- Tightness or pain in the chest

We don’t know for sure what causes asthma, but we do know that attacks are sometimes triggered by:

- Allergens (like pollen, mold, animal dander, and dust mites)
- Exercise
- Occupational hazards
- Tobacco smoke
- Air pollution
- Airway infections

There’s no cure for asthma. People with asthma can manage their disease with medical care and prevent attacks by avoiding triggers.

Is asthma really a problem?

Yes. Asthma is a serious health and economic concern in the United States and Ohio.

- In 2014, an estimated 830,000 adults and 420,000 children in Ohio had asthma.
- In Ohio, 10.8 percent of adults have asthma compared to 8.2 percent in Erie County.
- An estimated 7,248 adults in Erie County have asthma.
- In Ohio, 14.2 percent of children have asthma, compared to 15.9 percent in Erie County.
- An estimated 1,631 children in Erie County have asthma.

1 in 9 adults in Ohio have asthma

1 in 7 children in Ohio have asthma
What makes a person more likely to have asthma?

**Gender:**
- Women are more likely to have asthma. In Ohio, 14.3 percent of women and 7 percent of men have asthma.
- Boys are more likely to have asthma than girls. In Ohio, 17 percent of boys and 12 percent of girls have asthma.

**Race and ethnicity:**
- Black children and adults are more likely to have asthma than white children and adults.
- More than 1 in 5 black children in Ohio have been diagnosed with asthma.

**Education level:**
- In Ohio, adults who didn’t finish high school are more likely to have asthma than adults who graduated high school or college.

**Income level:**
- In Ohio, adults with an annual household income of $15,000 or less are more likely to have asthma than adults with incomes $35,000 and above.

**It can make you sick.**
- In Ohio during 2012, more than 17,000 inpatient hospital visits were made for asthma, at a rate of 15.1 visits per 10,000 residents.
- In Erie County, 96 visits were made for asthma in 2012 at a rate of 14.8 per 10,000 residents.
- In Ohio during 2012, more than 65,000 emergency department visits were made for asthma, at a rate of 54.1 visits per 10,000 residents.
- In Erie County, 629 visits were made for asthma in 2012, at a rate of 79.95 per 10,000 residents.

**It’s deadly.**
- Twelve people in Ohio die from asthma every month.
- In 2012, 146 people in Ohio died from asthma. In Erie County, there were no deaths in 2012.

**Sources:**
1. Centers for Disease Control, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2014
2. US Census, 2014
4. Ohio Hospital Association Clinical-Financial Database, 2011-2012

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