

Asthma Mortality

Death certificate data from the DPH Office of Vital Statistics demonstrate that from 2005 to 2009 in Connecticut, females, Black non-Hispanics, persons aged 65 years and older, and residents of Connecticut's five largest cities experienced the highest rates of asthma death compared to other state residents. *Asthma death* refers to any death for which asthma was the *underlying cause*, the first-listed cause of death (i.e., the disease or injury that initiated the chain of events leading directly to death). *Contributing cause* refers to the second-listed causes of death (i.e., significant conditions that may have contributed to the death). Unless otherwise specified, the rates presented here are age-adjusted. Please refer to Appendix L for detailed tables of the data discussed in this section.

From 2000 - 2009, the 10-year death rate for adults with asthma as the underlying cause was 14.6 per 1,000,000 persons and 26 per 1,000,000 persons with asthma as a contributing cause. In comparison, the 10-year child asthma death rate was 1.9 per 1,000,000 and 0.6 per 1,000,000 with asthma as the underlying cause and contributing cause, respectively. Since 1996, the rates of asthma as an underlying or contributing cause of death have been on a gradual, downward trend. The lowest observed asthma mortality rate within the last decade was 6.5 per 1,000,000 recorded in 2008 (Figure 39). In 2009 the rate of death for asthma as an underlying cause was 12.3 per 1,000,000, almost twice that of the previous year. The reasons for this are unclear at the time of this report. However, the Department of Public Health Asthma Program is examining potential contributing factors to the increased number of reported asthma deaths in 2009 (e.g., pandemic influenza, changes in coding of death certificates).

From 2005 - 2009, asthma was the underlying cause of death for 197 or 10 per 1,000,000 Connecticut residents. Of these deaths, 11.2% occurred in the month of March and 33.5% during the weekend (Saturday or Sunday). The majority of asthma deaths (72.6%) occurred in inpatient, ED, or outpatient settings. Asthma death rates were highest among females, Black non-Hispanics, and persons aged 65 years and older (Table 17). The asthma death rate for females was 11.1 per 1,000,000 or 1.3 times that of males. The rate of asthma deaths per million among persons classified as non-Hispanic Blacks was 26.1 compared to 16.6 for Hispanics, 7.7 for non-Hispanic Whites, and 4.7 for non-Hispanic Others. The asthma death rate for persons 65 years and older was 41.7 per 1,000,000. Children under five years old experienced the lowest asthma mortality with an asthma death rate of 0.9 per 1,000,000.

Figure 39. Asthma Death Rates by Underlying and Contributing Causes, Connecticut, 2000 – 2009

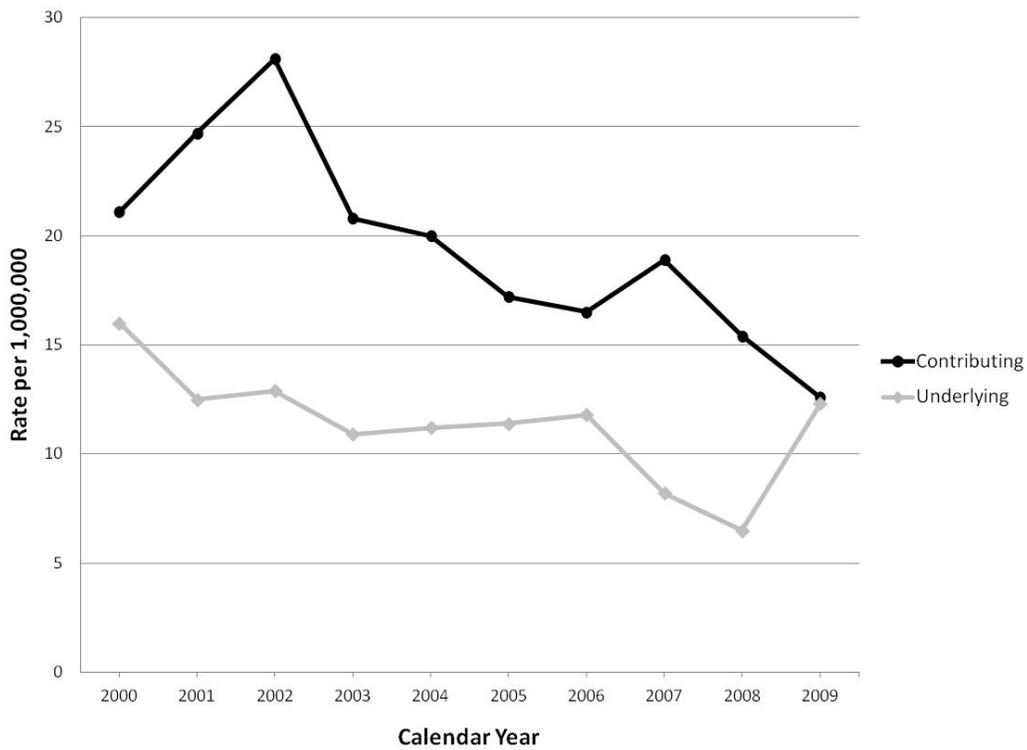


Table 17. Asthma Death Rates by Selected Demographic Characteristics, Connecticut, 2005 – 2009

Characteristics	Number	Age-adjusted rate per 1,000,000
Total	197	10
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	69	8.5
Female	128	11.1
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>		
White, non-Hispanic	134	7.7
Black, non-Hispanic	38	26.1
Hispanic	23	16.6
Other race, non-Hispanic	2	4.7
<i>Age group</i>		
0 – 4 years	1	0.9
5 – 14 years	6	2.6
15 – 34 years	15	3.4
35 – 64 years	76	10.4
65 + years	99	41.7

With respect to geography of residence, most of the asthma deaths reported from 2005 - 2009 were among residents of Hartford County and persons in non-rural areas. Consistent with previously reported observations about the distribution of the asthma burden in Connecticut, the asthma mortality rate for Connecticut's five largest cities exceeded the combined asthma mortality rate for the rest of the state (Table 18). Deaths during 2005 - 2009 among residents of Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, Stamford, and Waterbury occurred at a rate of 18.9 per 1,000,000 compared to 8.3 per 1,000,000 for the rest of Connecticut.

Table 18. Asthma Death Rates by Five Largest Cities, Connecticut, 2005 – 2009

Town	Number	Age-adjusted rate per 1,000,000
Total	197	10
Bridgeport	15	22.9
Hartford	14	25.6
New Haven	11	22.7
Stamford	6	10.1
Waterbury	9	15.7
Rest of Connecticut	142	8.3