

Asthma, Obesity, and Exercise

among Mississippi Adults, 2011



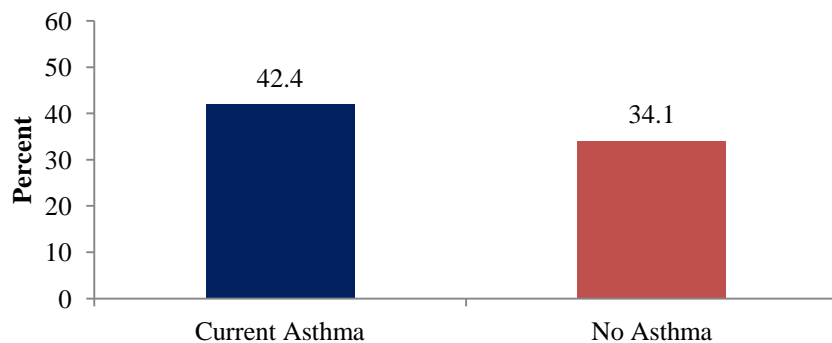
MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

In 2011, Mississippi had the highest adult obesity rate in the nation (33.3%). New research supports the hypothesis that obesity is a risk factor for asthma. Among obese people, excess abdominal fat may make breathing more difficult. In addition, poorly controlled symptoms may prevent adults with asthma from getting the exercise they need to maintain a healthy weight.

For adults, overweight and obesity are measured by the **Body Mass Index** (BMI). BMI is calculated by dividing a person's weight in kilograms (kg) by their height in meters squared (m²). A BMI \geq 25 and $<$ 30 is considered overweight. A BMI \geq 30 is considered obese.

In 2011, among the 169,009 Mississippi adults who currently had asthma, 42.4% (71,660) of them reported being obese.

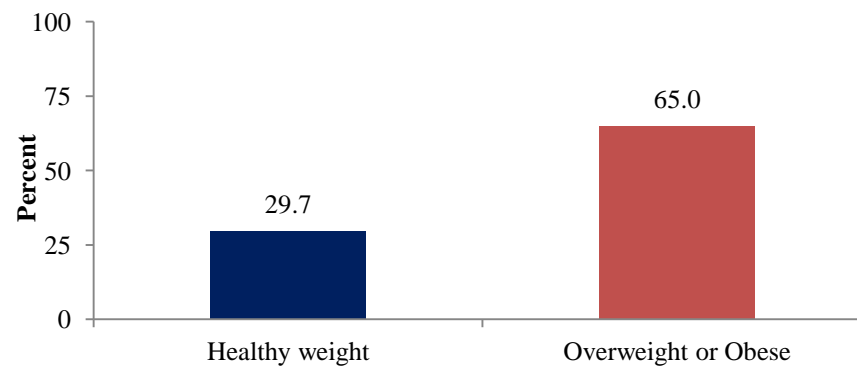
Adults who were obese by asthma status
Mississippi, 2011



- In 2011, 42.4% of adults with asthma were obese, compared to 34.1% of adults without asthma.

In 2011, only 29.7% of Mississippi adults with asthma reported a healthy weight and 65.0% reported being either overweight or obese.

Adults with asthma by BMI category,
Mississippi, 2011



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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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Data Source: Mississippi Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2011.

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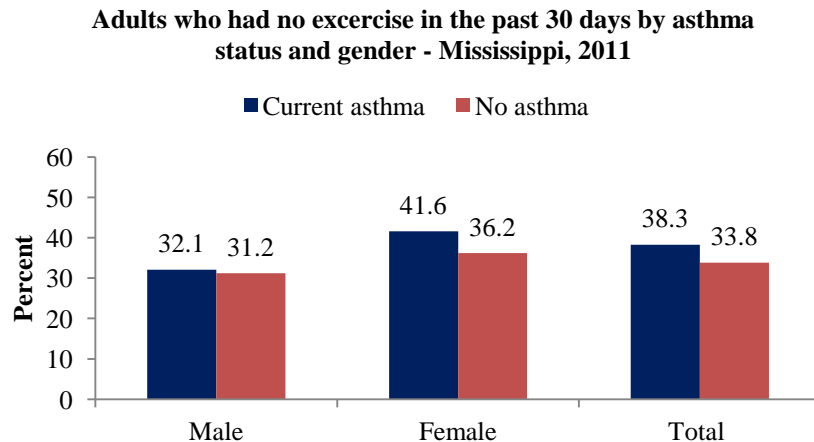
HOW ARE ASTHMA AND EXERCISE RELATED?

People with well-controlled asthma can fully participate in physical activity. However, poorly controlled asthma symptoms may interfere with physical activity. Asthma symptoms include shortness of breath, coughing, wheezing, and chest tightness or pain.

For some people with asthma, exercise can trigger asthma symptoms. To avoid aggravating asthma symptoms due to Exercise-Induced Asthma (EIA), people with asthma should consult with their doctor before engaging in strenuous activity. Certain activities may be better for people with EIA. Swimming, walking, leisure biking and hiking are less likely to trigger EIA.

EXERCISE AMONG MEN vs. WOMEN WITH ASTHMA

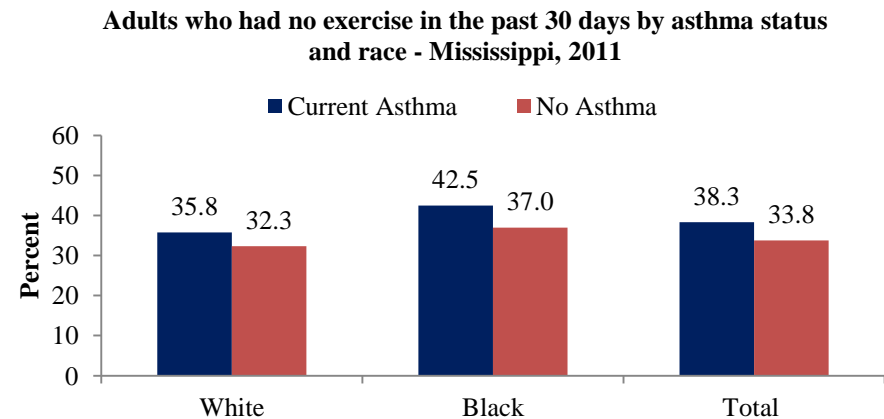
In 2011, more women than men with asthma reported no exercise in the past 30 days.



Among adults with asthma, 38.3% reported no exercise in the past 30 days, compared to 33.8% of adults without asthma.

EXERCISE AMONG WHITE vs. BLACK ADULTS WITH ASTHMA

In 2011, more black than white adults with asthma reported no exercise in the past 30 days.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Because asthma and obesity are related, it is important to address obesity to reduce the burden of asthma. Healthcare providers and communities should develop weight management and exercise programs targeted to Mississippi adults with asthma.

Healthcare providers and adults with asthma should work together to develop an asthma treatment plan. The asthma treatment plan should include a plan for symptom-free exercise.