

PHYSICAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

INDICATOR #16 Asthma Prevalence

DEFINITION

INDICATOR #11 — Asthma prevalence, by age and sex, expressed as a percentage.⁵

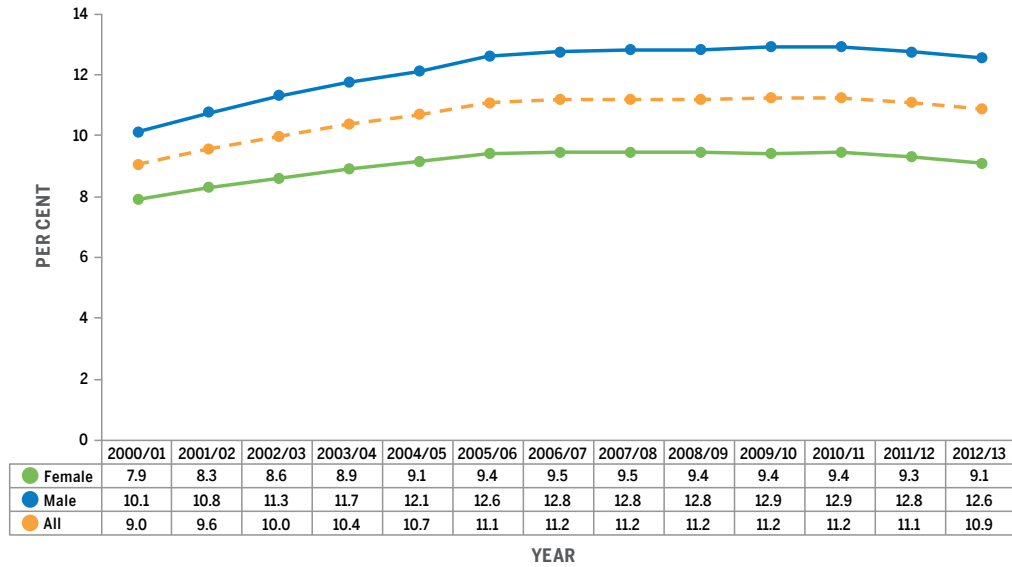
KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ **Asthma** is a “chronic inflammatory disease of the airway” that causes symptoms including shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, coughing, and wheezing.¹
- ▶ Asthma is the most common chronic disease in children² and is a leading cause of missed school days and hospital visits.³
- ▶ Asthma symptoms and episodes of severe shortness of breath can be triggered by exposure to allergens, environmental irritants, viral infections, exercise, and strong emotions.³⁻⁵
- ▶ Poor asthma control^{h,6,7} can negatively impact a person’s overall quality of life, impacting their ability to participate in sports, school, and other recreational activities.^{4,8}
- ▶ In Canada in 1998/99, there was a higher percentage of asthma among children age 0–19 compared to adults, as well as a higher percentage seen in male children age 0–19 compared to female children the same age.⁴
- ▶ The overall average asthma prevalence for Canada is 8 per cent for youth age 12 and up.⁹
- ▶ Figure 16.1 shows that in BC, the total prevalence rate for asthma among children and youth age 5–19 for 2012/13 was 10.9 per cent, which is a decline from a persistent peak of 11.2 per cent from 2006/07 to 2010/11.
- ▶ Figures 16.2 and 16.3 show variation by health authority and health service delivery area.

⁵ While the original indicator specified analyses by age, this indicator has been examined for age 5–19 as a group at this time. Future analyses may further explore the impact of age within this indicator.

^h According to the Canadian Thoracic Society 2012 guideline update, whether asthma is being controlled depends upon a person’s frequency of symptoms, his/her ability to participate in physical activity, the frequency of exacerbations, days missed at school or work, and measure of lung function.⁶ Other definitions also include future risk for asthma symptoms or progression of loss of pulmonary function.⁷

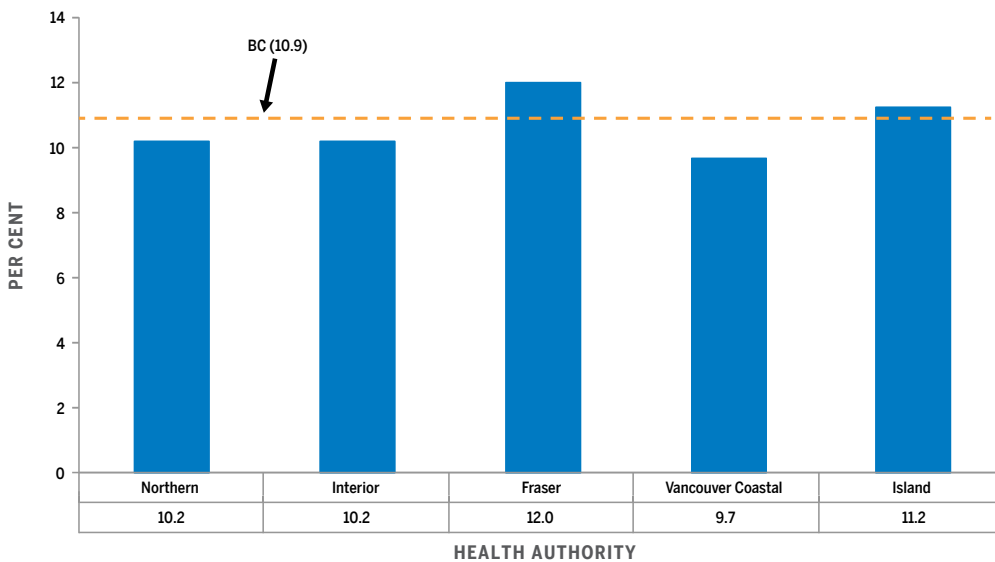
FIG 16.1 Percentage of Children and Youth Age 5-19 with Asthma, by Sex, BC, 2000/01 to 2012/13



Note: See Appendix B for more information about this data source.

Source: BC Ministry of Health, Population Health Surveillance and Epidemiology, Chronic Disease Registry, 2000/01 to 2012/13. Prepared by the Surveillance and Epidemiology Team, BC Office of the Provincial Health Officer, 2016.

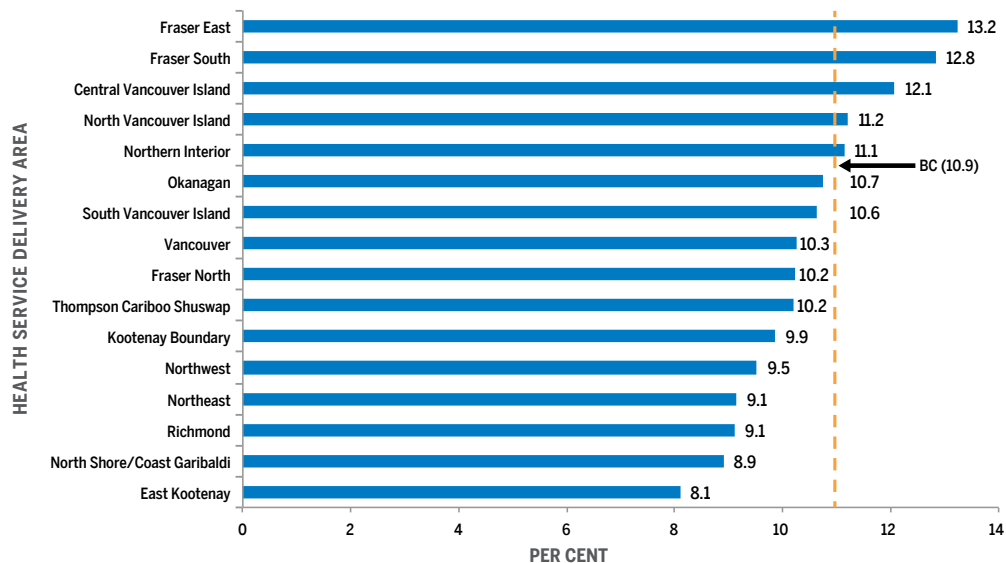
FIG 16.2 Percentage of Children and Youth Age 5-19 with Asthma, by Health Authority, BC, 2012/13



Notes: Health authority is based on the residence of the child. See Appendix B for more information about this data source.

Source: BC Ministry of Health, Population Health Surveillance and Epidemiology, Chronic Disease Registry, 2012/13. Prepared by the Surveillance and Epidemiology Team, BC Office of the Provincial Health Officer, 2016.

FIG 16.3 Percentage of Children and Youth Age 5-19 with Asthma, by Health Service Delivery Area, BC, 2012/13



Notes: Health service delivery area is based on the residence of the child. See Appendix B for more information about this data source.

Source: BC Ministry of Health, Population Health Surveillance and Epidemiology, Chronic Disease Registry, 2012/13. Prepared by the Surveillance and Epidemiology Team, BC Office of the Provincial Health Officer, 2016.

REFERENCES

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