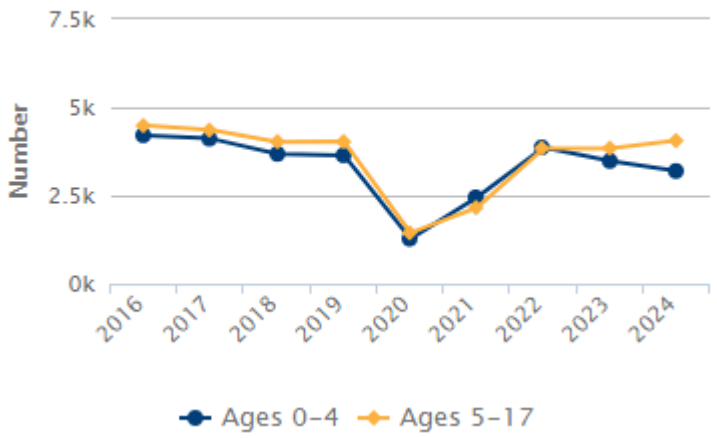
KidsData

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Childhood Asthma in California

Number of Asthma Hospitalizations, by Age Group
California



Definition: Number of hospital discharges for a primary diagnosis of asthma among children ages 0-17, by age group (e.g., in 2024, there were 3,195 asthma hospitalizations among California children ages 0-4).
Data Source: California Breathing, tabulation of data from the California Dept. of Health Care Access and Information (May 2026).

Rate of Asthma Hospitalization Among Children Ages 0-17: 2024

Locations	Rate per 10,000
California	8.6
Alameda County	6.0
Contra Costa County	6.8
Fresno County	9.3
Kern County	4.2
Los Angeles County	9.4
Orange County	6.5
Riverside County	8.7
Sacramento County	11.5
San Bernardino County	8.8
San Diego County	13.4
Santa Clara County	8.5

Definition: Number of hospital discharges for a primary diagnosis of asthma per 10,000 children ages 0-17, by age group (e.g., in 2024, the asthma hospitalization rate among California children ages 0-4 was 14.5 per 10,000).
Data Source: California Breathing, tabulation of data from the California Dept. of Health Care Access and Information (May 2026).

Percentage of Children Ages 1-17 Ever Diagnosed with Asthma: 2019-2020

What It Is

On kidsdata.org, estimates of lifetime asthma prevalence are derived from reports of children ages 1-17 being told by a doctor that they have asthma. Rates and numbers of asthma hospitalizations—which reflect the most severe asthmatic episodes—also are provided for children ages 0-17, by age group.

Why This Topic Is Important

Asthma is one of the most common chronic diseases among children in the U.S. and a leading cause of pediatric hospitalization. It also is among the most common reasons for missed school days, accounting for 13.8 million absences annually. Asthma is estimated to affect more than four and a half million children nationwide, resulting in a substantial economic burden for families and society overall . In 2022 alone, asthma hospitalizations for U.S. children cost more than $480 million.

Asthma rates vary by region, demographics, environment, physician diagnostic practices, and overall health care access and quality. Although identifying the impact of independent risk factors for asthma is difficult, children of color and those from low-income families experience disproportionately high asthma prevalence, hospitalizations, and barriers to care. In particular, African American/black and Hispanic/Latino (especially Puerto Rican) children experience a greater asthma burden than white children in the U.S.

Asthma can be life-threatening when it is not managed properly. The CDC estimates that approximately 50% of children with asthma do not have their disease under control. Symptoms can be managed with regular medical monitoring, e-health technologies, and personalized action plans that help children use medicine as prescribed and avoid asthma triggers . However, children who face difficulty accessing high-quality health care are less likely to have well-controlled asthma.

How Children Are Faring

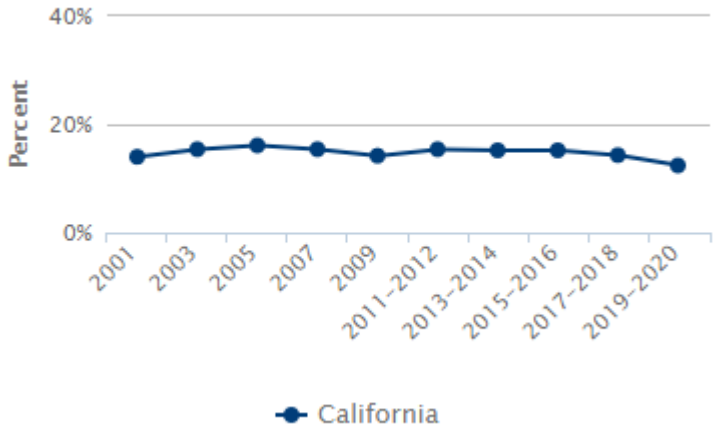
In 2019-2020, an estimated 12% of California children ages 1-17 had been diagnosed with asthma at some point in their lives, down from 16% in 2005. At the county level, the share of children ever diagnosed with asthma ranged from fewer than 1 in 20 (San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara) to more than 1 in 4 (Butte, Kings, Napa) in 2019-2020.

While asthma does not result in hospitalization for most children, there were 7,251 hospitalizations for asthma among children ages

Locations	Percent
California	12.4%
Alameda County	16.5%
Contra Costa County	10.5%
Fresno County	13.0%
Kern County	7.6%
Los Angeles County	13.3%
Orange County	14.1%
Riverside County	11.9%
Sacramento County	8.5%
San Bernardino County	8.9%
San Diego County	10.6%
Santa Clara County	9.3%

Definition: Estimated percentage of children ages 1-17 who have ever been told by a doctor that they have asthma (e.g., in 2019-2020, 12.4% of California children had been diagnosed with asthma in their lifetimes).
Data Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, California Health Interview Survey (Feb. 2022).

Percentage of Children Ages 1-17 Ever Diagnosed with Asthma



Definition: Estimated percentage of children ages 1-17 who have ever been told by a doctor that they have asthma (e.g., in 2019-2020, 12.4% of California children had been diagnosed with asthma in their lifetimes).
Data Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, California Health Interview Survey (Feb. 2022).

0-17 statewide in 2024—a rate of 8.6 hospitalizations per 10,000. The number of pediatric asthma hospitalizations in 2024 was nearly three times higher than in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic (2,719 hospitalizations in 2020). California children ages 0-4 generally experience higher rates of asthma hospitalization (14.5 hospitalizations per 10,000 in 2024) than older children ages 5-17 (6.4 per 10,000 in 2024).

View references for this text and additional research on this topic:
https://charts.kidsdata.org/topic/45/asthma/summary