Healthy Homes Asthma Survey

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Et al.

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Healthy Homes Asthma Survey
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University of Massachusetts Lowell, School of Health and Environment

BACKGROUND
• Asthma is a serious health concern among older adults.
  - Second highest rate of Asthma related hospitalization.
  - Highest number of deaths because of Asthma.
• High prevalence of Asthma in MA elders.
  - 8.4% of adults 65 and older
  - 9.5% of adults 65-79

RESULTS
• Over 20% of subjects reported being diagnosed with asthma.
• More than 2 out of 3 use potentially irritating cleaning products in their home.
• About 20%-30% reported difficulty breathing and having to take medicine because of respiratory issues.

DISCUSSION
• The results indicate that a large proportion of Lowell seniors have a high rate of respiratory diseases and are also exposed to potential irritants.
• This study could be used to develop ways to alleviate this health issue.
• Future studies should have a larger, more representative, and more diverse sample.

OBJECTIVES
• To investigate the prevalence of asthma and respiratory illness in Lowell senior public housing.
• To determine the prevalence of asthma allergens and related risk factors.

METHODS
• Cross Sectional Study.
• Subjects were recruited at Lowell Housing Authority senior social events.
• Questionnaire gathered information on:
  - current respiratory diseases and living conditions.
  - age, medical care, and potential environmental risk factors.
• Data was analyzed in Microsoft Excel.
• Analysis investigated prevalence of irritants and health outcomes.

Table 1. Demographic and Health Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64 or Younger</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>65-79</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 or Older</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Conditions</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPD</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphysema</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.2</td>
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</table>

Table 2. Respiratory Irritants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Air Freshener</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candles</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning Chemicals</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mold</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mice</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cockroaches</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REFERENCES
• Fitzsimmons K, Huisingh C, and Zotter J. (2011) Asthma Among Older Adults in Massachusetts. Centers for Disease Control.

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