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## Healthy Homes Asthma Survey

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**Presenter Information**

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# HEALTHY HOMES ASTHMA SURVEY

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## 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

## 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**

| AGE                       | N        | %        |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|
| 64 or Younger             | 15       | 26.3     |
| 65 - 79                   | 30       | 52.6     |
| 80 or Older               | 12       | 21.1     |
| Total                     | 57       | 100      |
| <b>GENDER</b>             |          |          |
|                           | <b>N</b> | <b>%</b> |
| Male                      | 25       | 43.8     |
| Female                    | 32       | 56.1     |
| Total                     | 57       | 100      |
| <b>Current Conditions</b> |          |          |
|                           | <b>N</b> | <b>%</b> |
| Asthma                    | 12       | 21.8     |
| COPD                      | 11       | 20.3     |
| Emphysema                 | 5        | 10.2     |

**Table 2. Respiratory Irritants**

|                    | N  | %    |
|--------------------|----|------|
| Smoking            | 14 | 24.6 |
| Air Freshener      | 38 | 66.7 |
| Candles            | 25 | 49.0 |
| Cleaning Chemicals | 39 | 68.4 |
| Mold               | 5  | 9.3  |
| Rats               | 1  | 1.9  |
| Mice               | 3  | 5.8  |
| Cockroaches        | 7  | 12.3 |

## 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.

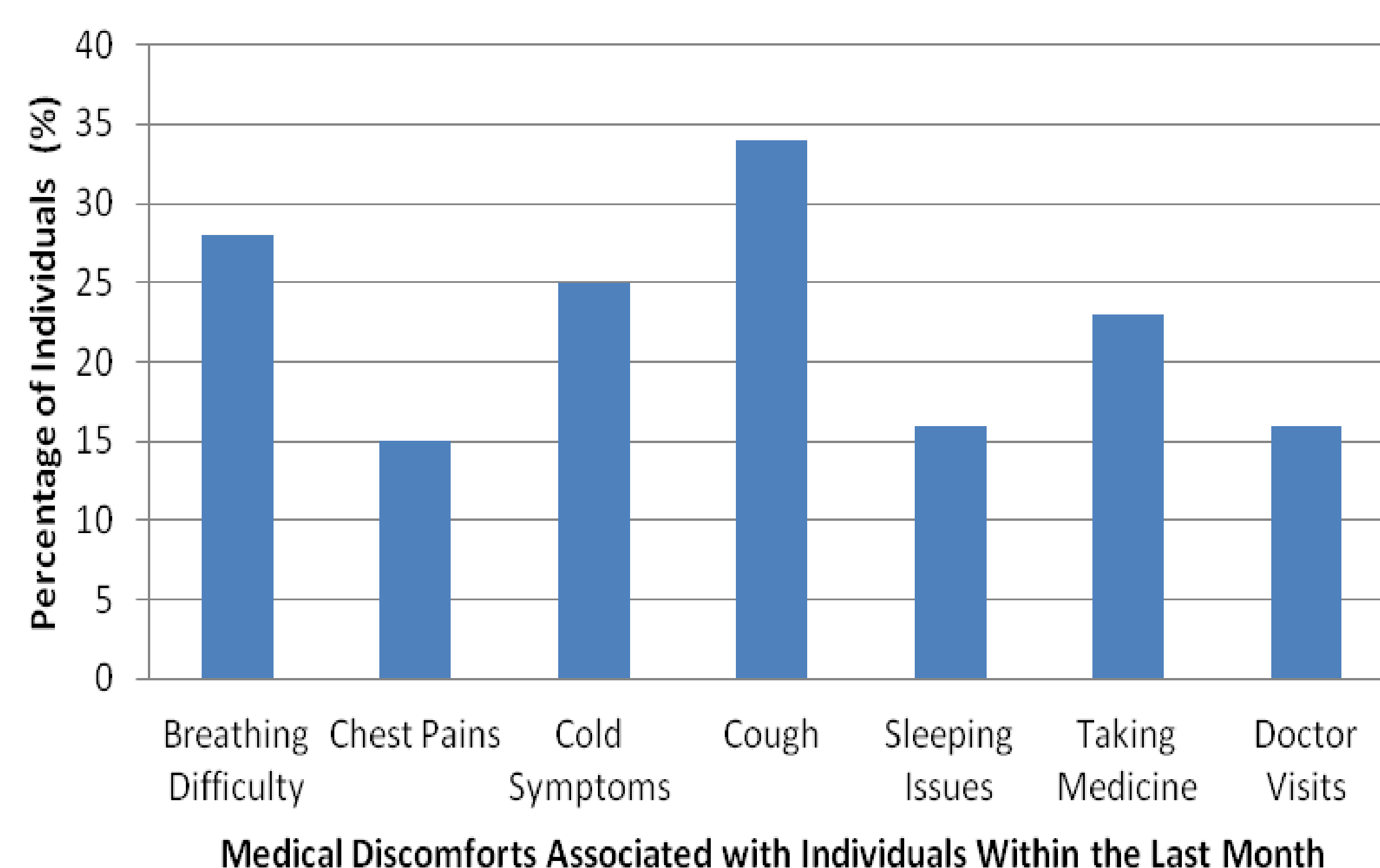
## DISCUSSION

- 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.

## REFERENCES

- Fitzsimmons K, Huisingh C, and Zotter J. (2011) *Asthma Among Older Adults in Massachusetts*. Centers for Disease Control.
- Massachusetts Registry of Vital Records and Statistics. (2000-2007) Accessed at MassCHIP, Massachusetts Department of Public Health

**Medical Conditions Recorded**



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