



Asthma

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In August 1999, Australian Health Ministers announced asthma as a National Health Priority Area in recognition of the significant burden that asthma places on the Australian community in terms of health, social, economic and emotional costs. Asthma is a major cause of school absenteeism, child emergency department attendance and admission to hospital. More than 60,000 Australians are admitted to hospital annually due to asthma. There is evidence that up to 60% of asthma deaths may be associated with avoidable factors.¹

The NHMRC has invested over \$75.3 million for asthma research from 2000 to 2007.

Asthma research	
2000	\$4.2m
2001	\$6.8m
2002	\$7.9m
2003	\$8.1m
2004	\$8.9m
2005	\$11.8m
2006	\$12.6m
2007	\$14.8m

These figures are correct as at March 2007. They may differ from previously published figures.

According to Asthma Foundations Australia² we live in a community where:

- over 2 million Australians have asthma
- approximately 1 in 6 children have currently diagnosed asthma
- approximately 1 in 10 adults have currently diagnosed asthma
- Indigenous Australians have more problems with asthma than other Australians
- asthma is one of the most common reasons for hospital admissions in children
- 397 people died due to asthma in 2002.

NHMRC is Australia's peak body for supporting health and medical research; for developing health advice for the Australian community, health professionals and government; and for providing advice on ethical behaviour in health care in the conduct of health and medical research.

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¹ Department of Health and Ageing, www.health.gov.au

² Asthma Foundations Australia, www.asthmaaustralia.org.au

