

Monday, 11 January 2016

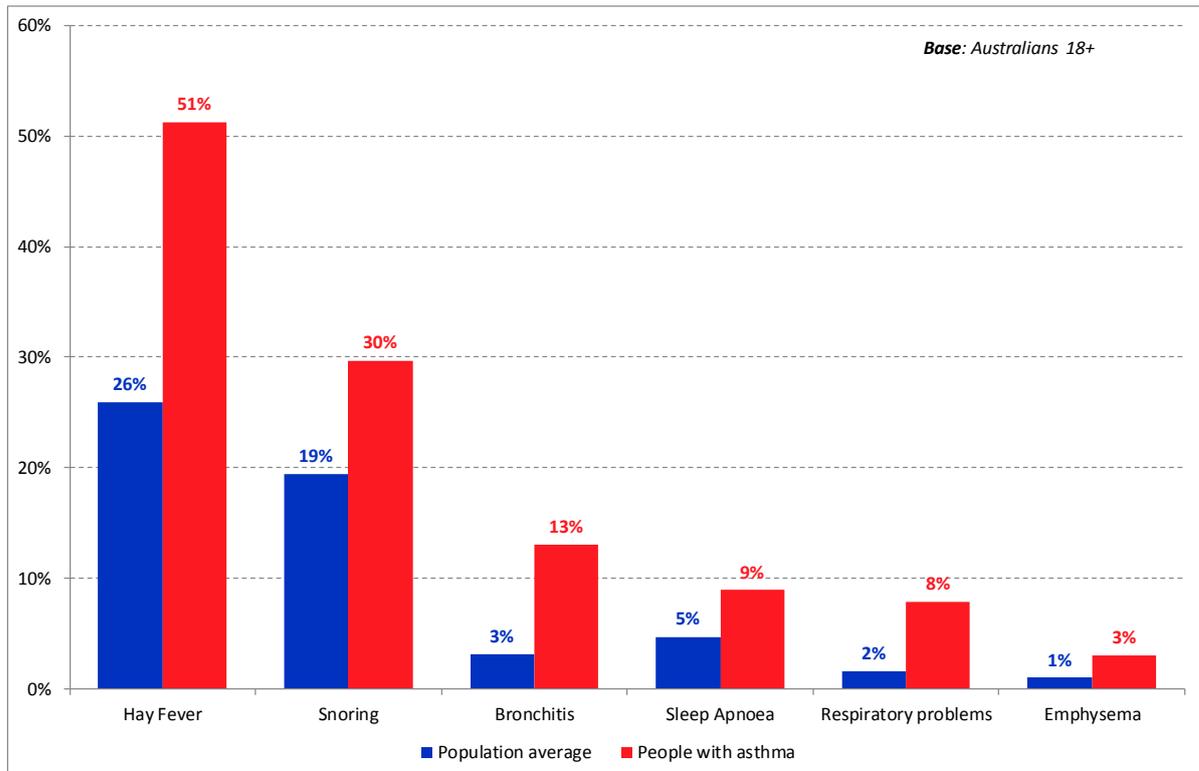
Australians with asthma also more vulnerable to other respiratory conditions

Affecting 11% of the adult population (or 2 million people), asthma is one of the more prevalent lung/breathing conditions in Australia, third only to hay fever (26%) and snoring (19%). Yet these conditions don't exist in a vacuum – as the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research reveal, almost three-quarters (74%) of people with asthma also suffer from at least one other lung/breathing condition.

Between October 2014 and September 2015, more than half (51%) of Aussie adults with asthma reported experiencing hay fever at some point in the previous 12 months, well above the population average. Almost one-third (30%) of asthmatics reported that they also snored, while 13% came down with bronchitis in that time.

Prevalence of other breathing/lung conditions such as sleep apnoea (9%), respiratory problems (8%) and emphysema (3%) is also above average among people with asthma.

Incidence of lung/breathing conditions: people with asthma vs population average



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), October 2014 – September 2015 (n=47,737).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Asthma: who's at risk?

According to Asthma Australia, more boys have childhood asthma than girls, but by adulthood, women with the condition outnumber men. Our data bears this out, showing that a substantially higher proportion of women (13%) than men (9%) suffer from asthma.

Medical experts also agree that obesity increases a person's risk of developing asthma, another point supported by our latest findings. In fact, just over 15% of people with a Body Mass Index (BMI) classified as obese have the condition, suggesting that obesity is even more of a risk factor than smoking (just under 13% of smokers are asthmatic).

As it does for [so many other health conditions](#), socio-economic status also appears to influence a person's likelihood of having asthma. While 9% of people from the wealthy AB socio-economic quintile* are affected by the condition, prevalence increases to 13% among the financially challenged FG quintile.

Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan Research, says:

"In an average 12-month period, more than one in every 10 Australian adults suffers from asthma, making it one of the country's more widespread lung/breathing ailments. As if this weren't enough, asthmatics are often affected by other respiratory conditions, compounding the problem.

"While experts cannot pinpoint one definitive cause for the condition, it is believed that both genetics and lifestyle factors play a role. Lifestyle factors become especially pertinent when we consider that asthma is more prevalent among socio-economically disadvantaged Australians. Roy Morgan data has long confirmed the correlation between wealth and wellbeing, with people from affluent circumstances benefitting from better access to health education, nutritious food and quality health care. Meanwhile, among more disadvantaged sectors of the population, there is a much higher incidence of obesity and smoking — both key risk factors for developing asthma. And so the vicious cycle continues.

"Bearing this in mind, it is crucial for health bodies and/or government agencies to raise awareness among these susceptible groups about how they can reduce their risk of asthma. Not only would this result in improved quality of life for many people (and save them the expense of regular medication), but it would potentially ease some of the burden of our already stretched healthcare system."

** NB: A note on socio-economic quintiles: Roy Morgan Single Source collects thousands of data points from each survey respondent, allowing us to segment the Australian population in many ways. Socio-economic quintiles segment the population based on education, income and occupation, with AB being the top-scoring quintile and FG being the lowest.*

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's medical and health data, please contact:

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Related research findings

View our comprehensive range of profiles of Australians with different illnesses and conditions, such as the [People with Asthma profile](#) and various other [Lung and Breathing conditions](#). You may also be interested in the [Medicine on Prescription Buyer profile](#).

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2