

Occupational Asthma

The United States Department of Labor estimates that 11 million workers across a range of industries and occupations are exposed to one or more agents known to be associated with occupational asthma.⁷ Some occupational groups at high risk for the development of work-related asthma include chemical workers, construction workers, bakers, cleaners, textile workers, animal handlers, and health care workers.⁸

The Utah Asthma Program tracks occupational asthma through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Data were analyzed to assess the prevalence of work-related asthma in Utah and to assess exposure to workplace environments that may have caused or exacerbated asthma.

Key Findings

- Among adults with lifetime asthma, 5.1% said they were told by a health professional that their asthma was work-related.
- 5.0% of adults with lifetime asthma said they had ever changed or quit a job because it caused or made their asthma worse.

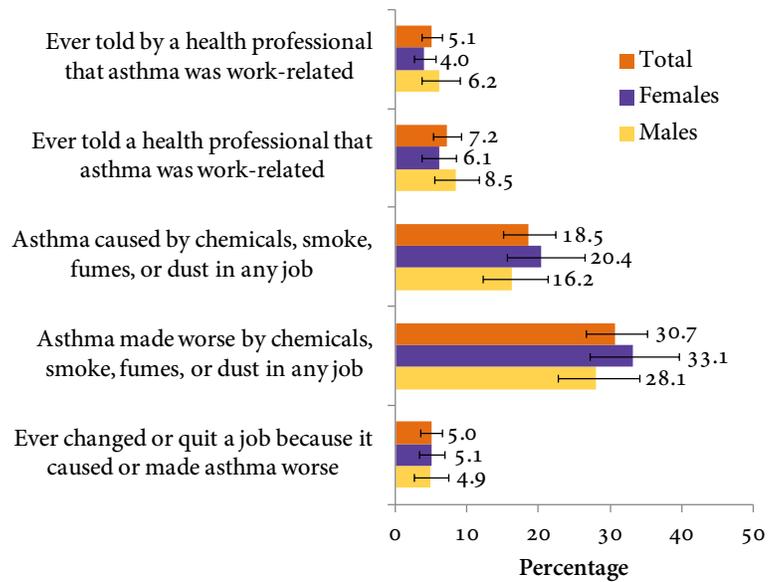


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Figure 33. Prevalence of Work-related Asthma Among Adults with Lifetime Asthma, Utah, 2009-2010

Approximately one in 20 Utah adults (5.1%) who were ever diagnosed with asthma said they were told by a health professional that their asthma was work-related. A slightly higher percentage (7.2%) reported having told a health professional their asthma was work-related. Percentages for males and females were not significantly different.

Only 5.0% of adults said they had ever changed or quit a job because it caused or made their asthma worse, though much higher percentages reported having been in a job that caused or made their asthma worse (18.5% and 30.7%).



Source: BRFSS Adult Call-back Survey, 2009-2010 combined. Crude percentages are presented with 95% confidence intervals.