



# Health Awareness

## Closing The Gap To Help Americans Control Their Asthma

(NAPSA)—Imagine waking up in the middle of the night and you cannot breathe. What if even being outdoors was uncomfortable because it felt like you were breathing through a mouthful of cotton?

For some of the estimated 22 million Americans currently living with asthma, this is often what they struggle with.

While most who live with asthma would probably tell you they have their condition under control, their bodies are likely saying something very different. In fact, you may be surprised by what recent survey findings say.

The Asthma G.A.P. in America: General Awareness and Perceptions, an extensive national telephone survey, evaluated awareness and attitudes toward asthma across genders, ethnicities and location.

Two-thirds of the asthma patients surveyed report that they have their condition under control, yet, more than half report that they experience symptoms such as shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing, chest tightness and/or phlegm production at least once a week.

“There is a large disconnect between what is being said and how patients are actually affected by their asthma every day. There is a great need for better asthma education on how to properly control the disease,” said Mike Tringale, Director of External Affairs at the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA).

Asthma, a chronic inflammatory disease of the airways, is

### Key Survey Findings

Survey findings highlight the fact that better asthma education is needed. Although asthma patients recognize the options available to control the disease, they do not have an accurate perception of the seriousness of their condition, and therefore, do not properly manage their asthma.

- One in three asthma patients report that in the past four weeks he or she had to use a rescue inhaler at least once a day.
- Seven in 10 of all asthma patients surveyed (71 percent) would explore new medications with their doctor if they heard about them.
- More than half of asthma patients say asthma symptoms limit their usual activities or enjoyment of life to varying degrees.



one of the most serious chronic medical conditions in the United States. The annual direct health care cost of asthma is approximately \$10 billion; indirect costs (e.g., lost productivity) account for another \$8 billion, for a total of \$18 billion. If asthma is not managed well, it can be life threatening, and despite the availability of treatments, it remains poorly controlled.

Among Hispanics and African-Americans, the percentage of people who experience asthma symptoms versus those who are diagnosed is startling.

Among Hispanics, only 8 percent of those surveyed report being diagnosed with asthma by a

health care professional, while 56 percent report that they have experienced asthma symptoms. A similar gap exists among African-Americans. A majority of female asthma patients (71 percent) report that they would like to be able to better control their asthma.

The Asthma G.A.P. in America: General Awareness and Perceptions survey was sponsored by the AAFA in collaboration with AstraZeneca. To learn more about controlling your asthma and to see detailed survey findings, visit [www.asthmagap.com](http://www.asthmagap.com).

### Survey Design/Methodology

Ipsos conducted the telephone survey on behalf of AstraZeneca and AAFA between January 22, 2007, and March 4, 2007, among 4,042 U.S. adults 18 years of age and older. This included a nationally representative probability sample of 2,029 Americans with or without asthma (849 men and 1,180 women), and additional people were added to provide total samples of 510 African-Americans, 500 Hispanics and 616 asthma patients.

All survey data were weighted to reflect the demographic profile of Americans 18 years of age and older nationwide, in specific ethnic groups and/or of adult asthma patients, based on statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Results based on the sample of adults nationwide have a margin of error of +/-2.2 percentage points, with a 95 percent confidence level. The margin of error for the various subsample results is higher and varies.