

Vermont Asthma Program

Helping Vermonters

Breathe Easier

August 2014

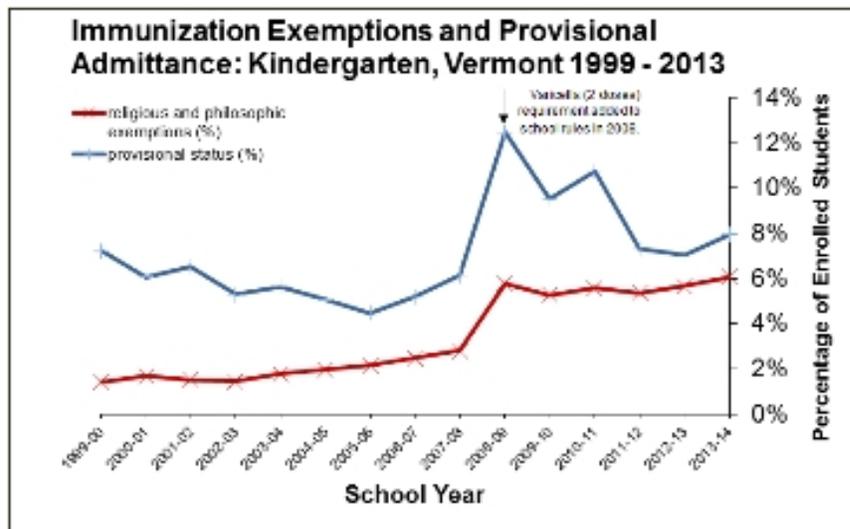


Greetings from the Vermont Asthma Program!

The Vermont Department of Health Asthma Program is excited to that we were successfully awarded another 5-year funding grant from the CDC! We can't wait to continue our work in improving consistent asthma control and making strides in environmental and pediatric control of asthma. Special thanks to everyone who helped in the application process!

August is *National Immunization Awareness Month*

-It is a great time to think about statewide immunization rates as we get ready to head back to school. Children and adults are at particular risk for vaccine-preventable diseases, particularly influenza and pneumococcal infections. Recommendations say that all individuals with asthma should receive a pneumococcal vaccination and an annual influenza immunization. In 2010, a little over half (54%) of Vermont adults with current asthma received influenza vaccinations. Nearly half (42%) of Vermont adults had received a pneumococcal vaccine. Rates were better for adults over the age of 65 than those aged 18-64. For Vermonters aged 17 and younger with asthma, about three-fourths received influenza immunizations in 2010. Data were not available for pneumococcal vaccinations among children with asthma in Vermont.



Upcoming Events

*Asthma Advisory Panel

Meeting:

August 22

*Champ Camp:

August 17- August 22

Did you know?

Vermont ranks well below other states in immunization rates. 86% of Vermont kindergartners have been fully immunized.

Only 1/3 of Vermonters with current asthma ages 18-64 years old received a pneumonia vaccine.

Each vaccine can be researched at [the CDC vaccine website.](#)

Fact Sheets

[Vermont Immunization Program 2013 Annual Report](#)

[Immunization Surveillance of Individual Vermont Schools](#)

Publications

[Vermont State Asthma Plan](#)

[The Burden of Asthma in Vermont](#)

[Healthy Vermonters 2020](#)

Quick Links

[VDH Asthma Program](#)

[Controlling Asthma](#)

[Tools for Managing Asthma](#)

-Dr. Anne Schuchat, an Assistant U.S. Surgeon General, was in Vermont recently urging parents to vaccinate their children. Click through to watch WCAX's [coverage](#) of the visit or listen to her on [Vermont Edition](#).

-VDH has a fantastic website to help inform parents about vaccines. [oktoaskvt.org](#) has information, planning aids and a question forum to help parents get and stay informed regarding their kids' immunizations. Since it is particularly important for children with asthma to be fully vaccinated, this is an especially pertinent resource for parents of asthmatic children.

-One of the best ways to improve asthma control is to maintain a strong physician-patient relationship. Being prepared for appointments can help patients get the most effective help. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources has a tool to help patients prepare for appointments and build questions to ask their doctor. Find the tool [here](#).

Asthma and Environmental Health:

-The [Wheezy](#) smartphone app is in development to help predict asthma attacks before they begin. There are many smartphone apps that help log asthma exacerbations or answer questions on the go, but none exist that can give information about future problems. Chris Stiffler was designing such an app this summer when a major asthma attack struck and he died tragically before design was complete. Fortunately, partner Scott Shrake is pushing design through and the app should hopefully be beta-tested, FDA-approved and released on the market by the end of the year.

-Last month, the EPA released the [2014 Climate Change Indicators in the United States Report](#). The report includes a section on health effects, and the Ragweed Pollen Season section is particularly relevant to changes affecting asthmatics. The extended growing season in the spring and fall can also exacerbate asthma-related problems and increased mold and moisture resulting from more flooding is a predicted issue for asthmatics as well.

-The [Environmental Public Health Tracking Program](#) will present on data related to asthma, climate change, smoking and housing at the next Asthma Advisory Panel Meeting on August 22.

-President Obama meets with children suffering from asthma exacerbated by pollution:

[Asthma Surveillance](#)

[Resources & Information](#)

[Envision Program](#)



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Raw Video: The President Talks With Young Asthma Patients

-A recent [report](#) found that mothers who are obese or overweight during pregnancy are more likely to have children with asthma. The review looked at 100,000 mother-child pairs and found that the risk of a child having asthma was 36% higher if the mother was obese during pregnancy. The authors noted that this influence on childhood asthma appears to be even stronger than status of asthma in the mother.

School Health and Asthma

-How asthma friendly is your school? Answer the questions on this [American Lung Association Fact Sheet](#) to find out. If the answer to any of the questions is "no" then your school could be doing more to make a more asthma-friendly environment for students, faculty and staff.

-Vermont schools have done a fantastic job in recent years in providing nutritious school meals for all students. A study out Australia found that broccoli may be a viable supplemental or alternative treatment for asthma. Sulforaphane was named as being the primary nutrient responsible for decreasing lung inflammation and reversing airway blockages. Read about the research [here](#).

Smoking and Asthma

-[Recent research in epigenetics](#) has shown that the effects of cigarettes are exponentially more drastic than solely on the individual level. Early research shows that men who are exposed to cigarette smoke in utero are more likely to have daughters with asthma. These fascinating findings should pave the road for more research on the far-reaching interconnectedness of smoking and asthma.

-Watch this snippet on what goes into cigarettes:



What's in a cigarette?

Please keep in touch!

Let us know if you have any questions -- or if there's an asthma-related issue you'd like to know more about.

Take care,

Jane

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