Past Year MDE Among Adolescents Aged 12 to 17 by Age Group and Past Year Asthma Status: 2005 to 2014 NSDUH

For each age group, youth with past year asthma had a significantly higher rate of past year MDE than youth without asthma.

Asthma and depression are both common health concerns among adolescents. For example, more than 1 in 12 adolescents have asthma.\(^1\) Data from the 2005 to 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) shows that about 1 in 11 adolescents aged 12 to 17 had a major depressive episode (MDE) in the past year.\(^2\) MDE among adolescents is defined a period of at least 2 weeks during which they had either depressed mood or loss of interest in usual activities and also experienced a change in functioning, such as problems with sleep, eating, energy, concentration, and self-worth.\(^2\) According to 2005 to 2014 NSDUH data, adolescents aged 12 to 17 with past year asthma were more likely to have past year MDE compared to those without asthma (11.4 vs. 8.8 percent). This pattern held true among adolescents aged 12-13, 14-15 and 16-17. For example, among 16-17 year olds, those with asthma were more likely to have past year MDE than those without asthma (14.7 vs. 11.5 percent) (Figure 1).

Assessing the relationship between asthma and depression is complicated because NSDUH data do not identify which health concern came first. Having asthma may increase the likelihood of developing depressive symptoms, while depression may impact the severity of asthma.\(^3\) Recognizing the association between asthma and depression among adolescents may inform prevention and treatment efforts. For example, understanding this relationship may help parents, schools, and pediatric care providers detect and start treatment.

SAMHSA resources to help recognize the signs and symptoms of adolescent depression and to locate mental health services are available at: [https://www.samhsa.gov/disorders/mental](https://www.samhsa.gov/disorders/mental) and [https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov](https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov).

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1. For more information, see [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/asthma.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/asthma.htm)
2. MDE is based on diagnostic criteria from *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV*. For more information, see the 2014 NSDUH mental health detailed tables available at [http://samhsa.gov/data/](http://samhsa.gov/data/)

Source: National Surveys on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 2013 to 2014. The NSDUH is an annual survey sponsored by SAMHSA that collects data by administering questionnaires to a representative sample of the population through face-to-face interviews at their places of residence.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. The Data Spotlight may be copied without permission. Citation of the source is appreciated.