

# Pollen, Asthma, and Emergency Department Visits

How does Pollen Affect Those with Asthma?



## What did we want to know?

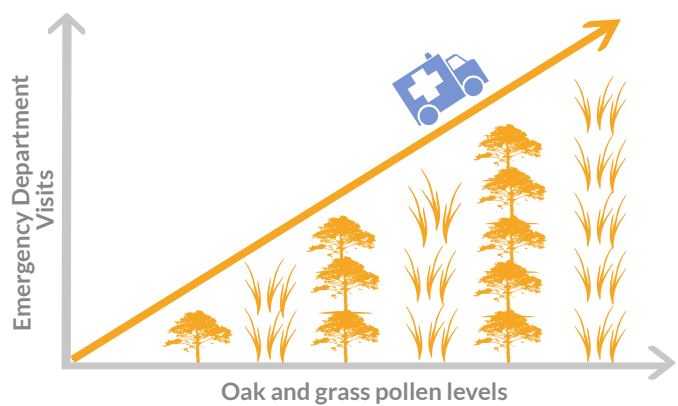
Is the amount and type of outdoor pollen related to emergency department visits for asthma and wheeze in Atlanta?

## What did we do?

We reviewed and compared data from 1993 to 2004 on:

- 1 The amount and types of pollen in Atlanta's air.
- 2 The number of emergency department visits for asthma and wheeze in Atlanta.
- 3 The amount of daily air pollution, like smog (since air pollution can also cause asthma exacerbations such as shortness of breath, coughing, wheezing, and chest tightness).

## What did we find?



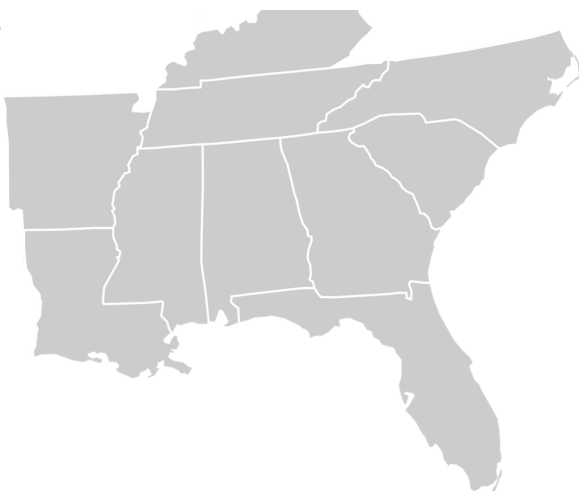
There were more emergency department visits for asthma and wheeze on days with high amounts of oak tree and grass pollen.

This was seen for both children and adults.

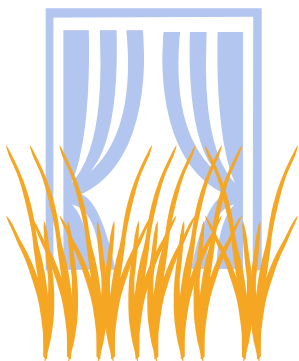
## What does this mean for you?

People with asthma living in the southeastern US are more likely to experience asthma exacerbation during oak tree and grass pollen seasons (spring and early summer).

Asthma exacerbations may become more frequent as changes in growing seasons are expected to increase the amount of these pollens in the air.



## How to breathe well on high pollen days:



Limit outdoor activities during times of high pollen (early morning, dry, or windy days).

Keep windows closed during pollen seasons and use air conditioning if possible.

Avoid wooded areas or gardens. If you are allergic to grass pollen, avoid mowing lawns and being around freshly cut grass or wear a mask (like a painter's mask).

Take a shower and change your clothes after being outdoors.

Avoid hanging clothes or linens out to dry, so they don't collect pollen.

*Note these tips only apply when pollen is high – at other times, enjoy the outdoors!*

Lyndsey A. Darrow, Stefanie E. Sarnat, et al. (2012) “Ambient pollen concentrations and emergency department visits for asthma and wheeze” American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jaci.2012.06.020>

