

CALIFORNIA

Asthma Emergency Department Visits

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Asthma is one of the most common chronic diseases and recognized as a growing public health concern.

The effects of asthma include missed school and work days, disruption of sleep and daily activities, urgent medical visits for asthma exacerbations, and even death. Asthma affects not only those with the disease but also their family members and friends, as well as schools and businesses. There is no cure for asthma, but symptoms can be controlled with access to medical care, appropriate medications, proper self-management, and trigger reduction. When asthma is controlled, people can lead normal lives and achieve their goals.

OVERVIEW

What is Asthma?

Asthma is one of the most common chronic diseases and has been recognized as a growing public health concern. The effects of asthma include **missed school** and **work days**, disruption of sleep and daily activities, **urgent medical visits** for asthma exacerbations, and even death.

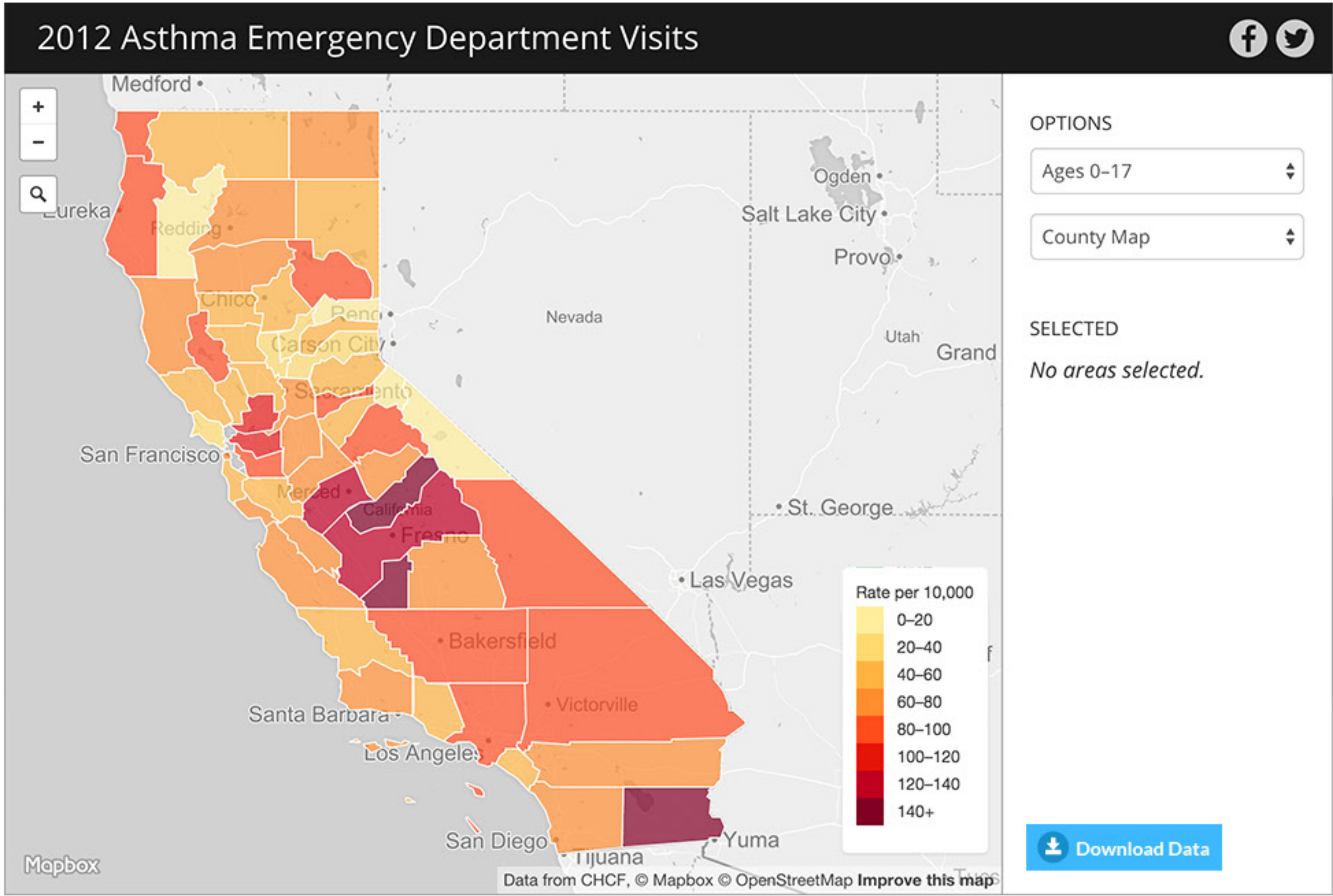
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INTERACTIVE

Asthma Rates by Geography

The map below shows 2012 Emergency Department visit rates for California counties and zip codes. Use the options on the side to toggle between age groups and map type. You can download the full data set, or select individual counties/zips to download.



RESOURCES

Where Do I Go From Here

Asthma Treatment

Did you know: A written asthma action plan from a health care provider can help you manage your symptoms and reduce the risk of emergency department visits or hospitalization by XX%, but only about 40% of people experiencing asthma have ever received one.

Experiencing asthma symptoms? [Contact your health care provider.](#)

Uninsured? [Get signed up.](#)

Plans and Solutions

Did you know: Asthma causes 11.8 million missed work days and 1.2 million missed school and daycare days in California annually, and asthma hospitalizations cost over \$1 billion in California per year.

Want to know what California's doing about it? [Check out the state's Strategic Plan for Asthma.](#)

Want to talk to an expert? [Contact the California Breathing team.](#)

Data Sets

Did you know: The CHHS Open Data Portal contains much of the data used for this site, along with a host of other datasets covering medical facility performance, other public health indicators, and social services delivery.

Want to access the state's data? [Check it out.](#)

Need other asthma data? Check out [AskCHIS](#), [BRFSS](#), the [US Census](#), and [California Breathing](#).



OVERVIEW

What is Asthma?

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[CONTINUE >](#)

How is asthma **measured**?

As with any disease, there are many ways to measure asthma severity in the population. Surveys reveal that about **5 million Californians have asthma**.

A subset of these sufferers will experience severe uncontrolled symptoms in a given year that cause them to visit a hospital emergency department (ED).

Measuring these ED visits can reveal the frequency of poorly controlled or severe cases of asthma in the population. Differences in the ED visit rate among different populations can suggest how to target additional investments in asthma care.





How **Common** Are Asthma ED Visits?

In 2012, there were about **145,000** ED visits for asthma in California, or **XX** per 10,000 Californians of all ages. The rate for youth aged 0-17 was much higher, with **74** ED visits per 10,000 young Californians.

The state's Let's Get Healthy California initiative has set a target of just **28 youth ED visits** for asthma per 10,000 by **2022**. Reaching this goal would represent an over **60% cut** in the youth ED visit rate over the next seven years.

185,831

Total ED Visits

73.92

Average Rate per 10,000
Age 0-17

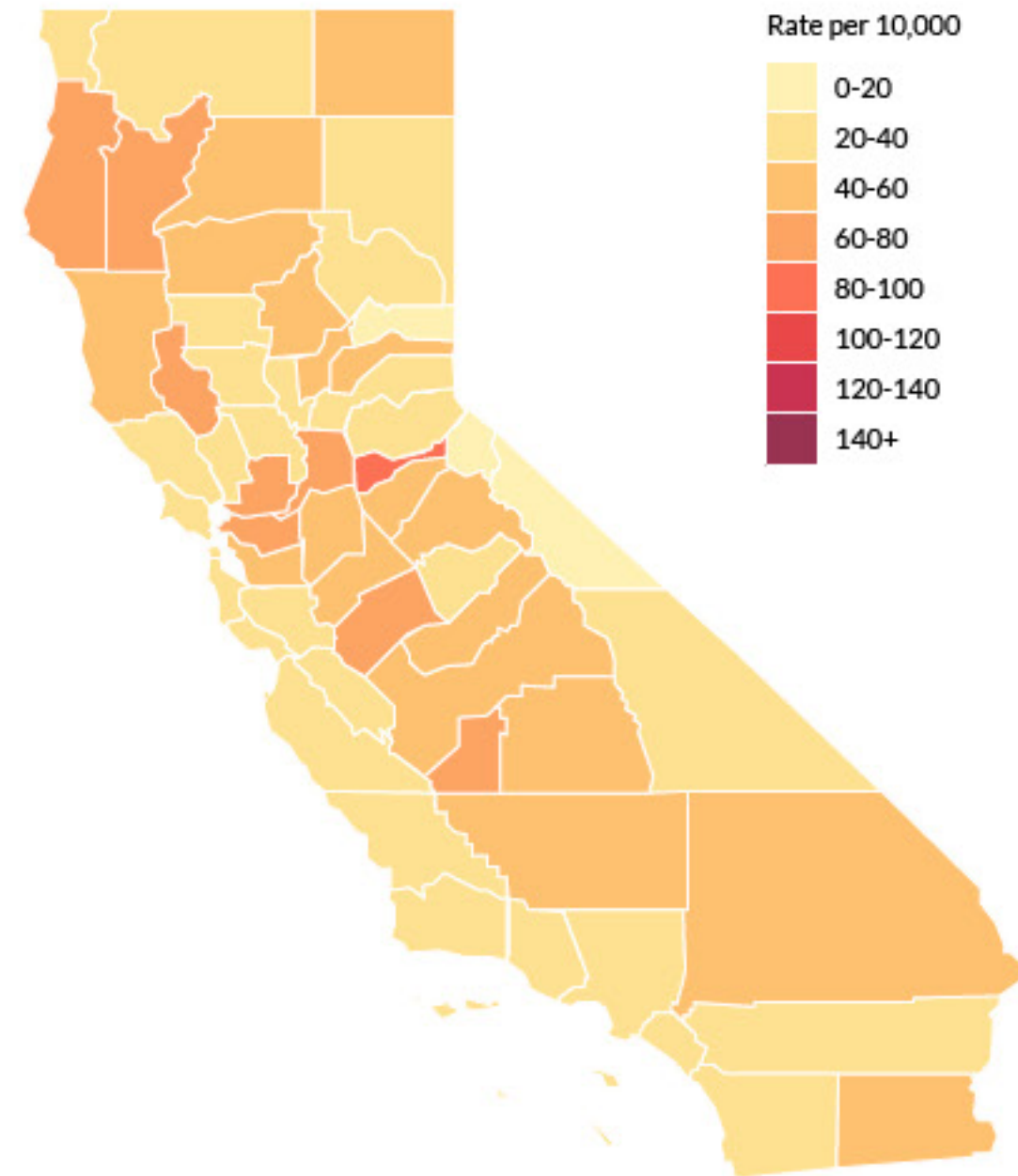
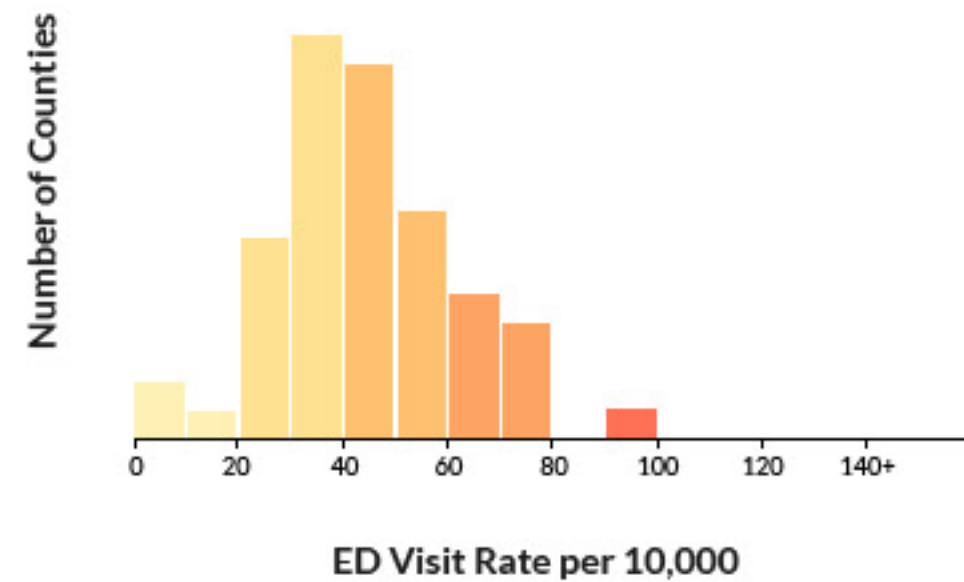
28

Average Rate per 10,000
Age 0-17



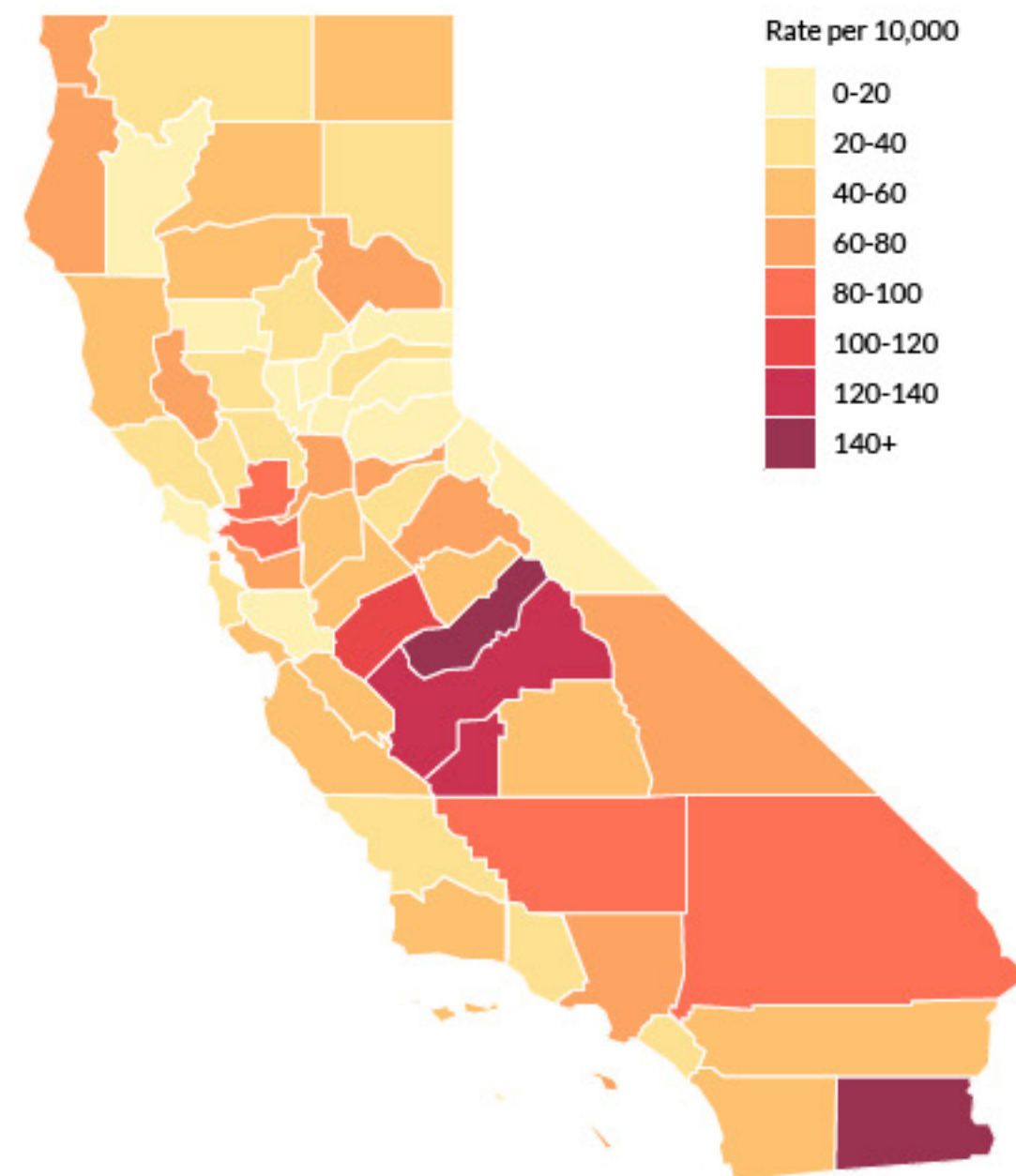
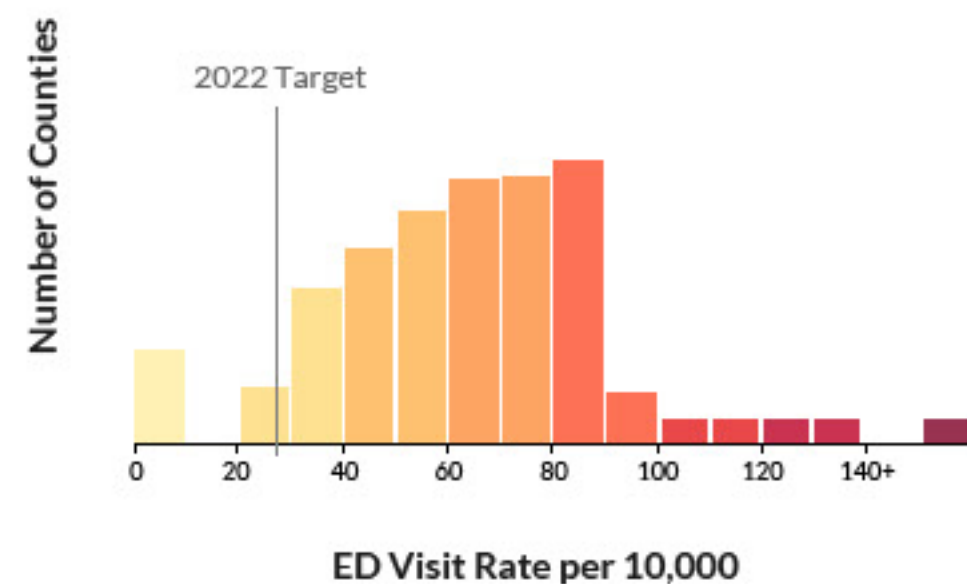
Geography: **Adults**

Asthma is present throughout the state, though rates vary by location. Adult ED visit rates are somewhat higher in inland counties than in coastal counties.



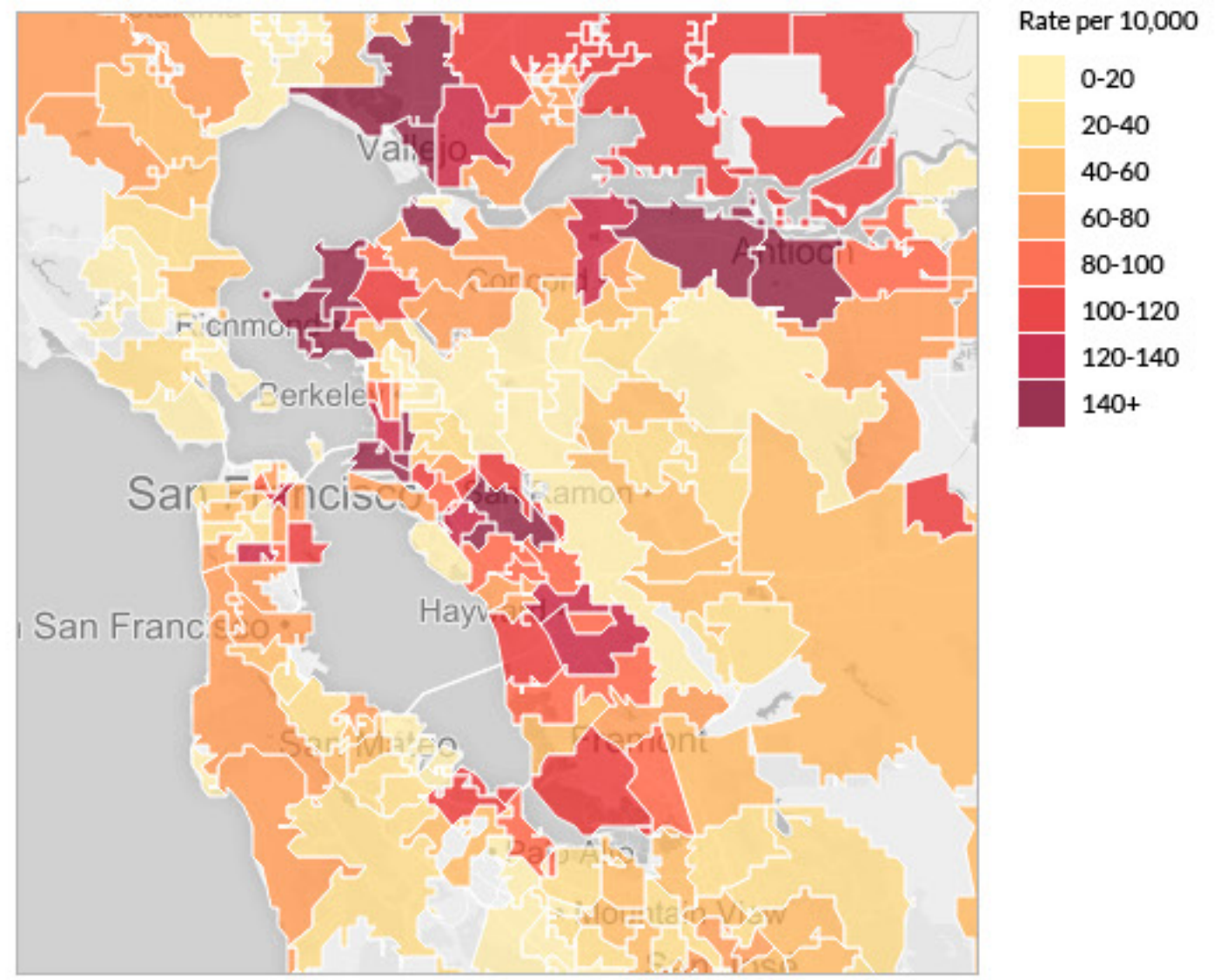
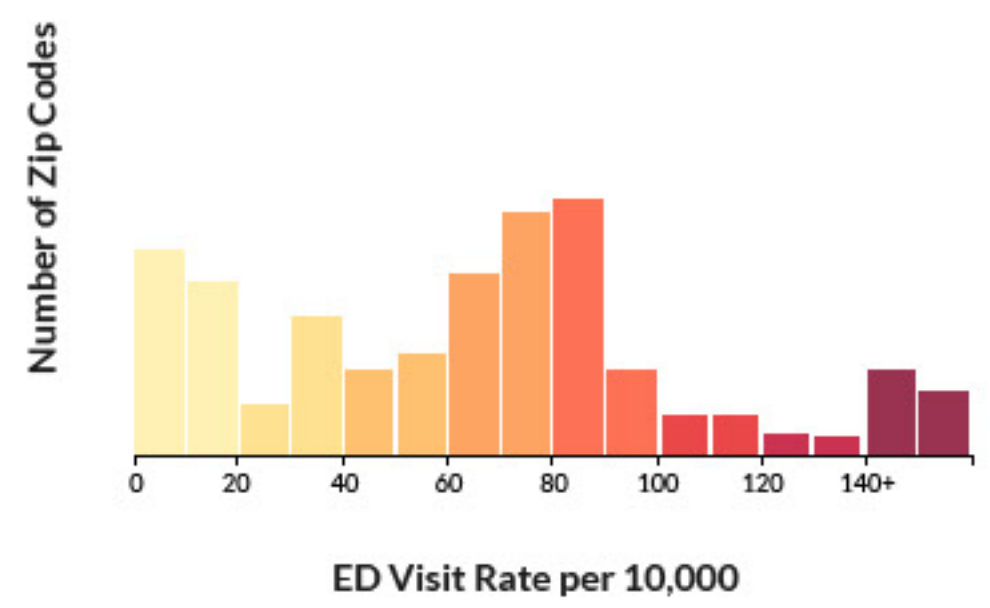
Geography: Youth Ages 0-17

Youth asthma ED visit rates, on the other hand, are much higher statewide and show much more variation among areas. Counties with the lowest rates tend to be northern and rural. Counties with the highest rates are concentrated in the San Joaquin and Imperial valleys.



Geography: San Francisco Bay

The map of youth asthma ED visits in the San Francisco Bay Area reveals a pronounced difference among rates in different areas. Most of the areas with extremely high ED visit rates are in the East Bay, though there are some small pockets in San Francisco as well.





Blacks have the **highest** asthma ED visit rates.

From 2005–2010, asthma ED visit rates among **Blacks** were **3–5 times higher** than among Whites. Furthermore, Blacks are the only race/ethnicity group for which these rates have **increased significantly over time**.*

Whites and Hispanics have similar asthma ED visit rates, while Asians/Pacific Islanders (A/PI) have slightly lower rates. (Hospitalization data do not allow for separating Pacific Islanders from Asians.) American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) have relatively low asthma ED visit rates, but research has shown that many AI/AN patients are misclassified as another race in hospital records, leading to underestimation of their true ED visit rates.

