

of time, and it hadn't been diagnosed as asthma. That's much less the case now.

But even with improved asthma detection, and effective methods available for keeping symptoms under control, asthmatics still suffer.

According to the Asthma Regional Council's report, New England children missed sixty three percent more days of school than children without asthma.

About a third of asthmatic adults reported limitations on their activity.

Diane Smoger at the American Lung Association says these health problems are avoidable.

Smoger: We should be able to prevent anyone from dying from this disease. And prevent anyone from having a lousy night of sleep or from coughing unnecessarily. We want people to live healthy, normal lives. And we know right now people are not living a healthy, normal life.

And this is evident in emergency room visits.

In 2000 asthmatic patients visited the ER in New Hampshire nearly seven thousand times.

According the Manchester Health Department the statewide cost of not preventing these visits was three point three million dollars.

New Hampshire's Health and Human Services Department has received a grant from the CDC to tackle asthma.

The Asthma Control Program is working on getting schools to use less toxic cleaning products, helping builders design better-ventilated homes, and making sure health care providers adhere to the best treatment practices.

Laurie Stillman from the Asthma Regional Council says the situation seems ironic.

Stillman: The New England states are probably doing as a region almost more to tackle asthma than any other region. So who knows. Maybe the asthma epidemic would be worse if we weren't doing what we're doing.

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