

Show rates for asthma visits during COVID-19 increased thanks to telemedicine

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COVID-19 has, among other things, pushed patients of all ages into greater use of telemedicine to carry out regular doctor visits. A new study being presented at this year's virtual American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) Annual Scientific Meeting reveals that "show rates" for children with asthma—how often parents brought their kids to an appointment rather than being a "no show"—increased with the use of telemedicine during four months of the pandemic.

"It would be normal to expect parents to be hesitant to bring kids into an asthma checkup during a pandemic," says allergist Kenny Kwong, MD, study author. "We run the LAC+USC Breathmobile program (an urban school-based mobile asthma program) in Los Angeles and have regular asthma patients we work with. The pandemic in 2020 resulted in closure of most Los Angeles schools and face to face visits were converted to telemedicine visits. We found that not only did kids show up for appointments, but their show rates were also significantly higher than during the same period in 2019."

In addition to [show](#) rates increasing, Dr. Kwong found that during the telemedicine period over 90% of patients reported well controlled asthma on their asthma control (ACT) test. This was comparable to pre-Covid visits. Finally, provider and nursing staff from the Breathmobile reported a 32% to 62% increase in time spent with each patient while conducting [telemedicine](#) visits compared to in-person visits.

"Kids with asthma need treatment that is consistent and specialized to

their individual needs," says allergist Lyne Scott, MD, ACAAI member and co-author of the study. "It's reassuring and encouraging that the quality of care [young patients](#), including those in underserved populations, received via virtual access kept their [asthma](#) under control. This study shows it's possible to move towards new models of treatment that increase access and convenience for the patient, and still maintain quality of care."

More information: Presentation Title: Inner City Asthma Telemedicine During COVID Pandemic
Presenter: Kenny Kwong, MD

Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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