

Bisexual adults more than twice as likely to have asthma as straight adults

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A new national study published in *Annals of the American Thoracic Society* finds that bisexual Americans had over two times the rates of asthma and other lung diseases as heterosexual adults. Overall, 29% of

bisexual adults reported experiencing lung disease compared to 14% of heterosexual adults. The study analyzed data from 12,209 adults in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health.

"Higher levels of discrimination experienced by [bisexual people](#) could lead to more stress and lead to inflammation or stress hormones which would worsen asthma," said lead author, Jason Nagata, MD, assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of California, San Francisco.

"Bisexual adults have been shown to have [worse health outcomes](#) across a number of physical and mental health domains, and we add to this literature by showing disparities in asthma and other lung diseases."

The study found that even people identifying as "mostly" heterosexual had higher rates of asthma than those who identified as exclusively heterosexual. Mostly heterosexual individuals may also face discrimination but may not be "out" and have access to the [social support](#) and communities available to "out" LGBTQ+ people.

"Medical professionals, social workers, and clinicians need to be aware of these sexual orientation disparities in health outcomes," said co-author, Kyle T. Ganson, Ph.D., assistant professor at the University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work. "Providing appropriate and tailored care is needed to address these disparities."

"Some [sexual minorities](#) may be less likely to seek care due to barriers to accessing health care or experiences of discrimination at a clinician's office. Doctors should offer materials on LGBTQ health, publicize nondiscrimination statements and have inclusive forms for sexual minorities," Nagata added, "so that they're not discouraged from seeking care."

More information: Jason M. Nagata et al, Disparities Across Sexual Orientation in Obstructive Airway Disease among US Adults, *Annals of*

the American Thoracic Society (2021). [DOI: 10.1513/AnnalsATS.202104-513RL](https://doi.org/10.1513/AnnalsATS.202104-513RL)

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