

Language barrier linked to poorer asthma outcomes

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(HealthDay)—For elderly patients with asthma, limited English proficiency correlates with poorer outcomes, according to a study published in the September issue of the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*.

Juan P. Wisnivesky, M.D., Dr.P.H., from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City, and colleagues analyzed language proficiency, asthma self-management, and outcomes in 268 [elderly patients](#) with asthma (≥ 60 years of age) who were receiving primary care at clinics in New York City and Chicago.

The researchers found that 68 percent of participants were non-

Hispanic, 18 percent were English-proficient Hispanic, and 14 percent were Hispanic with limited English proficiency. Hispanic persons with limited English proficiency had significantly worse asthma control, a significantly increased likelihood of inpatient visits, and significantly poorer quality of life. Limited English proficiency was also associated with significantly poorer medication adherence. Results were similar even after adjustment for demographics, asthma history, comorbidities, depression, and health literacy.

"This prospective study of elderly patients with asthma demonstrates several associations between limited English proficiency and increased asthma morbidity," the authors write. "Further research is needed to understand the underlying mechanism for these effects of limited English proficiency if health outcomes are to be optimized for elderly inner-city patients with [asthma](#)."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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