

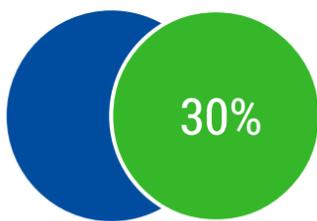
Allergy Fact Sheet



An allergy is a misdirected immune response against harmless substances resulting in chronic or recurring inflammation of the respiratory tract, skin or intestines, sometimes leading to severe anaphylactic reactions.



The most common allergies include allergic rhinitis, asthma, atopic dermatitis and contact allergies.



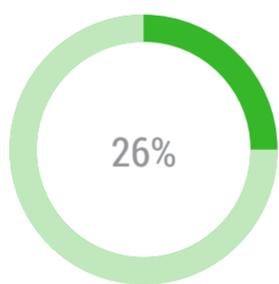
In a survey conducted by the Robert Koch-Institute among approximately 8,000 respondents in Germany, 30% of adults indicated that they had been medically diagnosed with an allergy at least once.(1)



Self-reported data indicate that 14.8% of adults suffer from hay fever, 8.6% from bronchial asthma, 4.7% from food allergies and 2.8% from insect venom allergies. Contact eczema occurs in 8.1% of adults, while 3.5% suffer from atopic dermatitis and 3.5% from hives.(1)



The share of women with allergies is 35.8%. They are more frequently affected than men (24.1%) (lifetime prevalence).(1)



Among children and adolescents, 26% has had an atopic disease during their lifetime (bronchial asthma, hay fever, atopic dermatitis).(2)



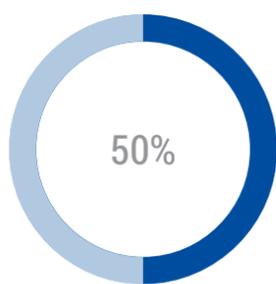
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Sources

(1) Langen, U.; Schmitz, R.; Stepphuhn, H. (2013): Häufigkeit allergischer Erkrankungen in Deutschland. Ergebnisse der Studie zur Gesundheit Erwachsener in Deutschland. In: Bundesgesundheitsblatt (56): 698-706.

(2) Schmitz R; Thamm M; Ellert U et al. (2014) Verbreitung häufiger Allergien bei Kindern und Jugendlichen in Deutschland. Ergebnisse der KiGGS-Studie - Erste Folgebefragung (KiGGS Welle 1). Bundesgesundheitsbl - Gesundheitsforsch - Gesundheitsschutz 57(7): 771-778.

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Scientists have determined that half of adults in Germany have developed an increased susceptibility to at least one allergy (medical term: sensitisation).(3) A sensitisation is a 'silent' allergy in which there are no symptoms. Not every person with a sensitisation will develop an actual allergy. The reasons for this are currently under investigation.



The incidence of allergic diseases remains high while fewer allergy specialists are available. The number of medical practices that invoice according to the corresponding schedule of benefits decreased by nearly 30% between 2007 and 2010.(4) At the same time, the number allergy patients did not decrease.



Mistreated or untreated hay fever often leads to the 'allergic march' – a progression to allergic asthma. Various studies have shown that the annual costs for a patient with allergic rhinitis and concomitant chronic asthma are six times higher than the costs for allergic rhinitis alone.(5)



Experts have calculated that Europe could save an average of €84 billion per year if allergies were properly treated.(6)



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Sources

(3) M. Haftenberger et al. 2013. Prävalenz von Sensibilisierungen gegen Inhalations- und Nahrungsmittelallergene. Bundesgesundheitsblatt 56: 687-697.

(4) J. Biermann et al. 2013. Allergische Erkrankungen der Atemwege – Ergebnisse einer umfassenden Patientenkohorte in der deutschen gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung. Allergo Journal 22 (6):366-373.

(5) B. Schramm et al. 2003. Cost of illness of atopic asthma and seasonal allergic rhinitis in Germany. Ur Respir J, 21: 116-22.

(6) T. Zuberbier et al. 2014. Economic burden of inadequate management of allergic diseases in the European Union. A GA2LEN review. Allergy 69: 1275-1279.