Air Pollution is Linked To More Hospital Days & Higher Cost of Care

Background

Hospital length of stay (LOS) is often used as a proxy for healthcare cost in the United States. This study investigates the association between outdoor air pollution and LOS among pediatric asthma patients. Air pollution data was collected from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Data on hospitalizations and air pollution were analyzed and show that air pollution was significantly associated with prolonged LOS.

Key Takeaways

Exposure to air pollution adversely affects the respiratory system in children.

This study confirms the association between air pollution and lung conditions in the pediatric population.

Asthma education should include the importance of air pollution on asthma control.

Impact

Air pollution can increase LOS by about 2-3 days

The average cost of a 3-day hospital stay is about $30,000

Efforts by industry and policy makers to reduce air pollution will have a positive effect on the health of children with asthma and can reduce expensive hospitalizations.


Center for Health & Nature
Contact: CenterforHealthandNature@houstonmethodist.org