Wood Smoke Exposure and Traffic Fumes Linked to Severe Adult Asthma

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Air pollution is known to exasperate breathing difficulties and new research in Respirology has identified a link between exposure to wood smoke and traffic pollution with severe cases of asthma in middle-aged adults.

Asthmatics who took part in the Tasmanian Longitudinal Health Study found that the severity of their symptoms was associated with both exposure to ambient wood smoke and being frequently exposed to heavy vehicles.

“Our findings of links between ambient wood smoke exposure and frequent exposure to heavy vehicular traffic and more severe asthma in middle-aged adults are new,” said Dr. John Burges, from The University of Melbourne. “These findings may have particular importance in developing countries where ambient wood smoke exposure is likely to be high in rural communities due to the use of wood for heating and cooking, and the intensity of air pollution from vehicular traffic in larger cities is well known.”

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