

Air Pollution Indoor and Outdoor: Quality of the Air and Its Effects on Asthma and Other Concerns

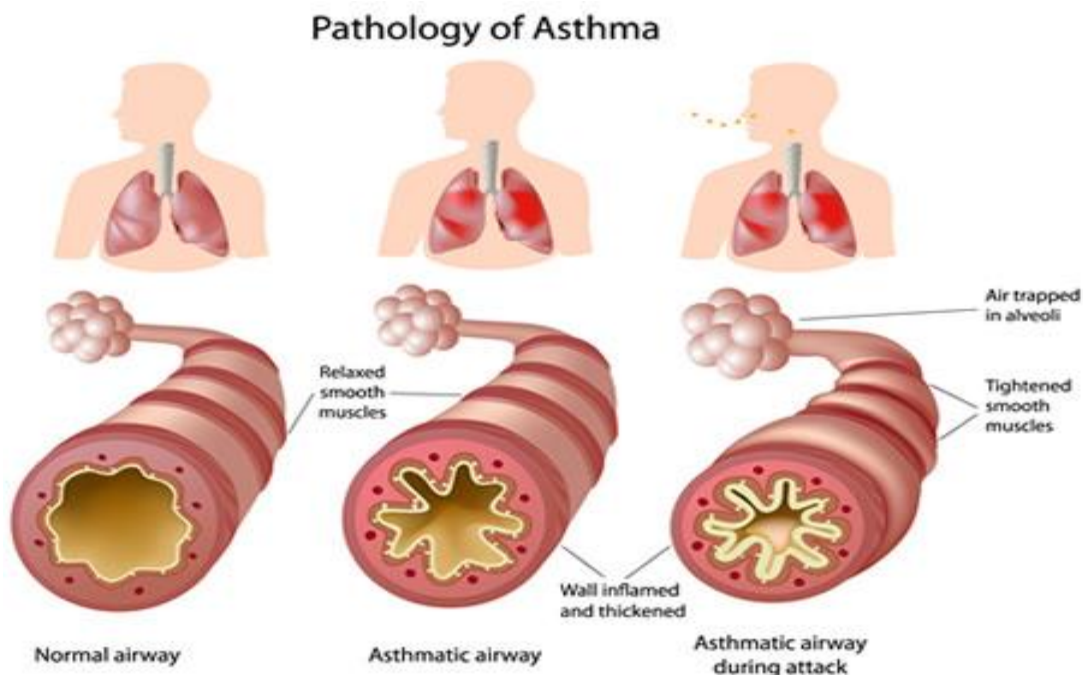
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Abstract: Outdoor air pollution is mainly because of traffic, industries. Asthma is a condition of our body, which cause breathing difficult and trigger cough, and shortness of breath. Prevalence of Asthma is increasing in most of the countries especially developed countries because of lots of traffic and industries. In this paper we will discuss about how pollutants, particulate matter, and traffic cause the air pollution, and how the air pollution leads to asthma and other problems related to the body. We will also look at some clinical studies that related asthma to air pollution.

I. INTRODUCTION

Asthma is a chronic disease which involves airways of the lungs, also called bronchial tubes which will allow air to come in and out of the lungs. So, if you have asthma your airways are inflamed, and it makes it difficult for air to pass in and out of lungs, which in turn cause the symptoms like coughing, chest tightness, wheezing. Outdoor air pollution has affected more than 3% of the lives that are lost, due to disability annually in 2010 Global Burden of Disease comparative risk assessment, and the increase in numbers from 2000 reports was notable [1].



Asthma is also one of the common illness of children, which affected around 6 Million US children in 2010 [2]. For asthma patients, the symptoms are related to physical activity. Healthy people develop symptoms only when they are exercising. Not all the pollutants of the air have effects on causing asthma in people. Some most common pollutants that are shown to have pulmonary effects on asthmatics are SO₂, NO₂, particulate matter less than 10 pm aerodynamic diameter (PM₁₀), and O₃. Some of these pollutants induce airway inflammation like PM_{2.5}[3-8] and Ozone, and some other cause airway hyper responsiveness like ozone and nitrogen dioxide [3,9], causing asthmatic problems. People with asthma have adverse health effects due to outdoor air pollution. Some of these health effects are like inflammatory changes, and admitting into hospitals and emergency rooms have increased, bronchial hyperresponsiveness, and increase in medication use, immune system changes etc., In this paper we will discuss about air pollutants that can cause asthmatic issues, and different asthmatic issues that can be caused by air pollutants. Let's discuss the air pollutants that cause asthmatic effects:

II. AIR POLLUTANTS THAT CAUSE ASTHMATICS

Nitrogen Dioxide: Nitrogen dioxide is one of those pollutants which is recognized as an important indoor and outdoor pollutant that develops symptoms like wheezing, lower forced expiratory volume in one second [10]. It is generated from gas heaters, automobiles, and cooking ranges. Some studies that are conducted, prove that there is an association between lung function reduction and Nitrogen Dioxide exposure [11,12]. The risk of severity of asthma exacerbations was also linked to Nitrogen Dioxide [13,14,15]. Oxygen reacts with Nitrogen to less extent during high temperature combustion and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) is formed, and at higher extent NO is formed. The main source of NO₂ and NO outdoor is power plants, motor vehicles and fossil fuel burning from industries. Cooking, kerosene heaters are the indoor sources of NO₂. Countries like united states have gas cooking stoves in most of the houses, and it contributes to production of NO₂. [16] Conducted analysis of studies on exposure to NO₂ and changes in bronchial hyperresponsiveness. 5 studies with people who does not have Asthma and 20 studies with people who already have asthma were analyzed, and it was determined that there is a small but significant increase in BHR after being exposed to NO₂ for people with asthma. And there is an 60% increase in BHR for the people with asthma. Studies that were done on people with exposure to controlled amounts of NO₂ at realistic concentrations did not have pulmonary function decrements in subjects with asthma or healthy subjects. [17] Did a study, and found that there is an increased emergency department visits for asthma during winter time and peak concentration of NO₂ is associated with that in Northern California, and also the same with emergency department visits and respiratory admissions in Greece [18]. In Spain, Barcelona peak NO concentrations are associated with emergency visits for asthma during both winter and summer [19]. The peak concentrations of NO₂ on an average are 58ppb, 69ppb and 50 ppb in Barcelona, Northern California, and Athens. Recent studies show that there is a 30% reduction in NO₂ levels in many countries all over the world due to covid quarantine [20]. As already stated above NO₂ is both an indoor and outdoor pollutant and there is an increase in respiratory issues in children from the NO₂ that is emitted from gas cooking stoves [34].

Sulfur Dioxide: Primary source of Sulfur Dioxide is industrial coal combustion and oil-fired plants, as fossil fuels contain sulfur naturally. Fossil fuel combustion release sulfur oxides and acid aerosols even though they are chemically distinct, they usually are available together as components of complex mixture. SO₂ does not cause chronic or acute adverse effects in animals but is a respiratory irritant when exposed to ambient concentrations [20,21]. Lung functions of asthmatics are altered by exposure to low levels of SO₂ [22,23].

Subjects with Asthmatics when they exercise in air containing even low levels as 0.25ppm of SO₂ develop bronchoconstriction within few minutes of exposure. And when these subjects are exposed to SO₂ for a brief period subjects may develop increase in air way resistance with a ventilation for oral breathing forty-one per minute [24-26]. A study was conducted by [27,28,29,30] which states that there is an inflammation of lungs when exposed to pollutants inhaled allergen and the pollutants are diesel exhaust particles, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, ozone in both animals and humans. Studies were done on subjects who are healthy and who are asthmatic by [31,32] and it was found that subjects with asthma are more sensitive to Sulfuric acid inhalation than subjects who are healthy. Even at a low concentration of Sulfuric acids at a level of 70 and 100 µg/m³ and exercising for about 30 minutes Forced Vital Capacity decrement was seen. By using scrubbing equipment in power plants which are coal fired sulfur dioxide exposure is reduced greatly in the developed countries, but it is still problem in developing countries. China author conducted a study on sulfur dioxide association with children with atopy and has seen prevalence of asthma [33]. In six thousand pediatricians sulfur dioxide exposure is investigated and it was found that 4500 cases reported obstructive bronchitis during 3 year period in German cities [38]. Exposure to Particulate matter and SO₂ is studied in 89 children who has asthma for over about 7 months, and there is an increase in respiratory symptoms, increase in medication use, fever and absence to schools with elevated exposure [39]. Inhaling SO₂ in lower concentration by subjects who has asthma, provoked acute airway bronchoconstriction similar to subjects who don't have asthma but inhaled higher concentration of SO₂ [35].

Particulate Matter: Particles of size greater than 10 micrometer aerodynamic diameter could damage the lower airways and lung portions which exchanges the gas. High concentrations of SO₂ and particulate is associated with increase in morbidity and mortality from the past studies [40-43]. The frequency of respiratory complains and the increase in mortality has raised the doubt that this could be because of exposure to particulate matter. This exposure to particulate matter in 1960's was associated with increase in respiratory symptoms and chronic obstructive lung disease [40]. Severe asthma exacerbations were noticed in subjects with long term, PM_{2.5} exposure [45]. And risk of increase in asthma and hospitalization has increased with PM₁₀ exposure [44]. In a study conducted in Utah PEF in subjects with asthma has seen a negative relationship with OM less than or equal to 10 micrometers [46]. A study conducted on hospital admissions have figured that there is an increase in hospital admissions by 5% with PM of size 10. And with PM of size less than or equal to 2.5 µm there is a 4% increase [47]. In a study done on 25 children with asthma, it was noted that medication use and symptoms have increase with PM exposure [48]. Studies show that out door Pm could easily penetrate indoors [49]. In a study done on homes of children from Seattle of 9 kids in winter, it was noted that indoor to outdoor ratio of PM is

less than 1 which is 0.98 [49]. Emissions of PM from biomass are associated with cough, wheezing [50]. A study which is done on short term exposure of PM showed that there is a positive correlation between asthma admissions in hospitals for kids and PM concentration [51].

Ozone: Ozone is formed by reactions which are sun driven and involves volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides (NO_x). There are number of studies conducted to know the effects of O₃ along with the presence of other pollutants. One study observed the interaction between other pollutants and O₃, and it was noted that prior to exposing to O₃ they were exposed to other pollutants, and the response to o has changed in those individuals, and the same happened with vice versa [52]. In old studies it was reported that an exposure to O₃ for 45 mins followed by exposure to SO₂ increased bronchial hyperreactivity in adults [53]. Children are at more risk than adults with increase in ozone concentration, and hospitalization risk is also more in children than adults [54]. The exposure in children to Ozone for short term has caused asthma, also in adults [55,56]. The long-term exposure to ozone cause onset of asthma, and this is not clear yet. Another study has found that that exposure to ozone has increased risk of asthma in adults especially males comparatively [57]. Another study conducted in California found that there is 36% to 70% reduction in bronchitis episodes in patients who has asthma with reductions in traffic related ozone [58].

III. CONCLUSION

In this review article we have summarized some studies that show association between air pollution and asthma. Some studies proved that short term air pollution has increased risk of hospitalization, in both adults and children who has asthmatic issues, and caused onset in subjects who don't have prior asthmatic issues. The air pollution is measured in terms of Nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, PM, Ozone, etc. We as a society all together need to reduce our common activities that could led to polluting air with these pollutants in possible ways.

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