AIR POLLUTION: A RISK FACTOR FOR CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE AMONG OLDER ADULTS

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Abstract: In the late 1990s, it became increasingly clear that air pollution even at the lower ambient concentrations, prevalent in many urban areas, was associated with increased mortality and other serious health effects. More recently, considerable research has focused on particulate air pollution as studies linked a growing number of health effects to fine particles. Hundreds of studies now indicate that breathing fine particles discharged by vehicles, factories and power plants can trigger a cardiac event and exacerbate respiratory disease in vulnerable populations. Older adults are one such subgroup considered more susceptible to the effects of airborne particles. This sensitivity can be attributed to a number of factors including loss of pulmonary functional reserve or compensation due to age or disease. Although there are a number of mechanisms have been proposed to explain the adverse impact of particles on cardiovascular health many questions remain, Answers to these questions will require further transdisciplinary research.

Keywords: air pollution, air pollution-related illness, airborne particles, cardiovascular disease, susceptibility of older adults