

Air Pollution Raises Risk of Sudden Cardiac Arrest: Study

FRIDAY, Sept. 24 (HealthDay News) -- Fine particles of pollution that linger in the air can increase the risk of [sudden cardiac arrest](#), warns a new study.

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Researchers compared data about air pollution levels in New York City and 8,216 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests that occurred in the city between 2002 and 2006.

They found that a rise of 10 micrograms per cubic meter of air in small-particle air pollution was associated with a 4 to 10% increase in the number of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests.

Pollution-related cardiac arrests occurred when particulate levels were high but still below the current EPA safety threshold of 35 micrograms per cubic meter of air.

This association was much stronger in the summer months, said the researchers from the North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System.

The study appears online Sept. 20 in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*.

"Small particulate matter is dangerous to health," study author Dr. Robert Silverman, an associate professor of emergency medicine and director of research in the department of emergency medicine at Long Island Jewish Medical Center, said in a health system news release.


"We need to figure out ways to combat air pollution and decrease the number of high-pollution days," he added.

This study adds to the growing number of studies that suggest air pollution is bad for the

heart.

Earlier this year, the American Heart Association issued a statement noting that evidence is growing that air pollution is a risk factor in [heart attack](#), [stroke](#) and cardiovascular death.

-- Robert Preidt

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SOURCE: North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System, news release, Sept. 20, 2010