

NATIONWIDE STUDY FINDS ASTHMA INCREASING... Consumer Affairs.com....August 12, 2005

More than fifty percent of the U.S. population tested positive to one or more allergens in a large national study, increasing their vulnerability to asthma, hay fever and eczema. The worldwide asthma rate has been rising steadily in recent, for reasons that are not entirely clear.

The new findings, based on data from the third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, show that 54.3% of individuals aged 6-59 years old had a positive skin test response to at least one of the 10 allergens tested.

The study, published in the August issue of the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, was conducted by researchers at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, both components of the National Institutes of Health.

If you have allergies that produce symptoms like wheezing, asthma, hay fever or hives, there's a good chance your kids will too -- and a lot earlier in life than previously reported, according to a study by University of Cincinnati (UC) researchers.

GLOBAL WARMING MAY COMPOUND ALLERGIES RESEARCHERS SAY RISING CARBON DIOXIDE LEVELS WILL RAISE POLLEN PRODUCTION

By Salynn Boyles WebMD Medical News Reviewed By Louise Chang, MD on Wednesday, June 07, 2006

June 6, 2006 -- We all may be sneezing, sniffing, and scratching more in decades to come, due to global warming. Harvard researchers say that higher levels of the greenhouse gas will also boost pollen production, causing allergy sufferers to suffer even more in the future. Just last week, Duke University researchers reported that rising atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide will likely fuel the growth of a more poisonous form of poison ivy.

The researchers studied the growth of ragweed under conditions mimicking both today's levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide and those projected for the future, assuming that climate change continues at its current pace.

Early Arrival of Spring

They found that the ragweed plants grown under the futuristic conditions produced about 55% more pollen than the plants grown under conditions more closely approximating today's climate. Researcher Christine A. Rogers, PhD, tells WebMD that global warming is already having an impact on the growing season, with the arrival of spring occurring earlier in most places. This, combined with an increase in carbon dioxide levels, will result in longer, more intense allergy seasons in the future, she says.

Ways to improve your personal environment by Elizabeth Jardina

STAFF WRITER

THE WORLD IS FULL of scary statistics. Here's another one: Indoor air can be two to five times as polluted as outdoor air. And the group responsible for this dire little nugget of information? The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

At this point, you might pull your chair back from your kitchen table and look around your kitchen. You might notice the conspicuous lack of smokestacks, dearth of highway traffic and the complete absence of smoky coal fires in your kitchen. You might shrug and figure that, once again, somebody is trying to scare you. But if you live in a typical home typically sealed to keep heat in, full of typical cleaning products, typical carpets, typical furniture, typical paints and other chemicals you're typically living in the midst of not-so-clean air.

- Why does all this matter? Poor-quality indoor air might give you a headache, asthma, dizziness, fatigue, or eye, throat or nose irritation. Some of the biggest sources of indoor air pollution are: Cigarette smoke (don't, and definitely don't in the house).
- Unvented or leaky oil, gas and wood stoves and furnaces.
- Carpeting, pressed wood products like plywood and flooring that are treated with formaldehyde (as bad as it sounds).
- Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that are released from paints, stains and hobby glue. (This isn't the good kind of organic; "organic" here just means it's a carbon containing compound.)
- Pesticides and cleaning products, especially those in spray form, which can hang around in the air for longer than you think.