

Blood cancer risk higher for kids living near busy roads- CDC

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Note: FL PK DR homes are 18 m (60 ft) away from 8,200 cars / per day

Note: Holland Park Basketball Court is 24 m (80 ft) away from 8,200 cars / per day

Inhaling toxic substances emitted by diesel cars, trucks and buses could be unhealthy for everyone, but it is especially harmful for children, warns the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Children who living near busy roads and tracks, particularly roads carrying heavy traffic, run a significantly higher risk for cancer, suggests the American health watchdog. The agency says young children who are exposed to high levels of vehicle exhaust in urban areas are likely to have greater risk for childhood leukemia (cancer of blood cells).

The agency reached its findings after reviewing seven previous studies.

The CDC researchers noted in the review that about 30 to 45 percent of Americans live near major roads in urban areas and are exposed to traffic-related air pollution. The agency says the reviewed studies suggest “that childhood leukemia is associated with residential traffic exposure during the postnatal period, but not during the prenatal period.”

The review highlighted the fact that young children diagnosed with leukemia were “50% more likely to live near busy roads than children without leukemia,” said Vickie Boothe, a CDC health scientist and lead author of the review article. “While the study found a link, it does not prove that living near a busy road causes leukemia.”

The reports says leukemia in the most common form of childhood cancer in the nation, representing about one-third of all cancers among children of age 14 and below. Surprisingly, in about 90% of childhood leukemia physicians failed to find out the cause.

In earlier research, experts had clearly established a link between residential traffic proximity and health conditions like asthma, heart disease and premature death. The CDC's review of seven studies that involved just over 8,000 children is the first comprehensive scientific review that assessed the link between residential traffic exposure and childhood blood cancer.

Lead author Boothe and Tegan Boehmer, a CDC epidemiologist and co-author of the article, believe exposure to vehicle exhaust is harmful for kids but are not sure how much exposure is too much.

The CDC researchers profess that their findings warrant increased precautionary interventions and public health messages in order to cut prolonged exposure to traffic-related pollution.

The latest systematic review appeared in the April issue of the American Journal of Preventive Medicine.

<http://www.healthnewline.net/blood-cancer-risk-higher-kids-living-near-busy-roads-cdc/2533313/>