# Does City Air Raise Your Blood Pressure?

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Buildings and prices aren't the only things higher in the big city. People who live in urban areas with lots of pollution also have higher blood pressure, according to study findings presented at the American Thoracic Society 2010 International Conference in New Orleans.

Researchers at the University of Dusiburg-Essen in Germany reviewed data from the Heinz Nixdorf Recall Study, an ongoing exam of almost 5,000 people, to find the sources of heart disease. Scientists focused on results from 2000 to 2003 dealing with the effects of air pollution on blood pressure.

The study showed that people living in places with lots of particulate air pollution—tiny particles created by vehicles, power plants and industry, all more common in and around cities—had higher blood pressure than residents in less polluted areas.

High blood pressure heightens people's risk of heart attacks and strokes.

"Our results might explain why people who live in more polluted areas are at a higher risk to suffer and die from these diseases," said Barbara Hoffman, MD, MPH, the study's lead author.

Click here for tips on how to clear your space of pollutants.

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