Air Pollution and Our Health

How our communities are impacted

Presentation to the Gateway Cities COG by:
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June 2, 2010
What is asthma?

● What is it like to have asthma?
  ● For children?
  ● For adults?
  ● For the parents of children?
Who is impacted?

- **Asthma is prevalent, and more cases are being diagnosed every day.**

- **Adults**: Over 1 in 12 adults in California has active asthma
  - 6.8% of adults in Los Angeles county:
    - South Bay 8.1%,
    - Orange County: 6.5%

- **Children**: Over 1 in 10 children in California have active asthma. It is the leading chronic condition for children.
  - LA: 10.9% in Los Angeles,
    - South 12.3%,
    - Orange County: 9.2%

- **General Trend**: In the past 10 years, asthma prevalence has increased.
Who is impacted?

- **Disparate Impacts:**
  - **Prenatal Exposure:** The children of pregnant mothers exposed to air pollutants in the first and second trimester are more prone to wheezing up to age of 4.
  
  - **Child Exposure:** Children who lived 400 meters from the freeway had an 89 percent higher risk of asthma than children living 1,600 meters away from the freeway.
    
    - Rates of ED visits, hospitalizations, and mortality are two to three times higher among Blacks than the next highest race/ethnicity groups.

- **Low Income:** Prevalence of severe symptoms is almost seven times higher among adults with household incomes below $20,000 (19.5%) compared to adults with household incomes over $100,000 (2.8%).
Why does air quality matter?

- We have bad air quality in this region:
  - The 2010 State of the Air report by the American Lung Association ranks the Los Angeles - Long Beach - Riverside, CA region:
    - #1 in Ozone pollution
    - #3 in year Round Particle Pollution
    - #4 in Short term Particle pollution

- **Bad air quality triggers asthma**, and potentially causes asthma:
  - The most common hospital-based medical care triggered by elevated air pollution levels are emergency room visits for asthma among children aged 17 and under, with more than 12,000 visits over the three-year study period.
Can we make a difference?

- **Smog and soot** worsen asthma and trigger attacks, and evidence suggests that diesel exhaust particles can cause asthma.

- **Key Point:** Reducing pollution levels can make a difference.
Thank You

- Please contact me if you have any question, or would like additional information.

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