

**SURVEY
CLEARS
THE AIR ON
PERCEPTIONS**



15%
think that they are responsible for current level of air pollution

94%
think their participation will have negligible effect on air pollution

96%
don't know when AC car owners don't turn off engine

STUNNING FINDINGS

96%
think that turning the engine off and on consumes more fuel

86%
think the engine does not produce fumes

67%
don't know when PVC gets due for renewal

70%
suffer from undiagnosed lung problems in Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Kolkata

While most of us broadly know that air pollution is dangerously high in India, dearth of health indicators always diluted the gravity of the problem. We are sure that the survey results will update people to the perils of air pollution and help them realize the extent of damage it is doing to them

—Rajeev Roy, senior architect and occupational, hazardous waste and Breathing Blue

Delhi is unmitigable between breath and fuel because of the high pollution levels. The need of the hour is the deconcentration of transport fuel and insisting of the pollution under cover / certification for vehicles on the road

—Anand Health, environment activist

Air pollution is a major environmental risk to health. By reducing air pollution levels, countries can reduce the burden of diseases from stroke, heart disease, lung cancer and both chronic and acute respiratory diseases including asthma

—World Health Organization

GASPING LITTLE HEARTS

Delhi tops the chart in India with 21% of its school-going children suffering from poor lung capacity, reveals a nation-wide survey

Bhisho Shajan Perappadan

How often have you insisted that your child or the little ones in the family go outside and get a whiff of fresh air? Think twice. Maybe it's not a good idea after all.

According to a nation-wide survey report, *Breathing Blue '15*, 36 per cent of the school-going children in the country failed badly in the Lung Health Screening Test (LHST), indicating that poor air quality across India, especially Delhi, could have a serious impact on their growing years. 21 per cent of the children surveyed in the Capital, fared 'poor' in the LHST, followed by Bengaluru (16 per cent), Mumbai (13 per cent), and Kolkata (9 per cent). Another 29 per cent fared as 'bad'.

The survey, conducted by the Breathing Blue Trust, which works in the area of controlling air pollution, confirms and presents the evidence that rising air pollution could be contributing to the deteriorating lung health of children in the area of health.

As the only cause for ill lung health among school-going children in India, noted Dr Prakash Kaul, representative of IIGAL Foundation, an NGO working in the area of health.



LUNG TEST ON CHILDREN

The survey included over 2,000 school students in the age group of 8-14 from across the country

quickly rate can move air in and out of his/her lungs, and how well the lungs take oxygen in and remove carbon dioxide out from the body. The tests, one, called, lung



capacity and pressure the severity of lung problems. Poor results on LHST mean compromised lung function and high probability of contracting pulmonary diseases, added Dr Kaul.

He also noted that the worst-affected are children who commute in unspaced vehicles as they seem to be even more exposed to dust and particles in the air in comparison to children who travel in packed vehicles.

In Delhi alone, around 92 per cent of children using 1775 'Compass' transport's 'one-way' service put 8 per cent of those who use packed transport.

While rising air pollution in the country poses serious health risks for all, it is more worrisome for children as they are yet in their growth years with vital organs of the body physiologically not mature enough to deal with it. This calls for an urgent need to raise awareness among people and figure out ways to address this issue effectively, said Dr Raj Kumar, HOD, Department of Respiratory Allergy and Applied Immunology, Tuberculosis and Chest Institute.

MEASURE TO CURB POLLUTION

500 hours needed to counter the effect of pollution due to a single individual

forcing off your engine while waiting at the red light

Life span of AEC vehicles can be increased by 2.2 years by following norms

White paper on asthma paints a grim picture

Bhisho Shajan Perappadan

On the eve of World Asthma Day the Indian Medical Association has an advisory that one should not ignore the first attack of asthma after the age of 40

KEY FINDINGS

- All wheezing is not asthma and all asthmatics do not wheeze
- Tired cough may be a sign of asthma
- If you are able to speak a sentence during an asthma attack, you do not have severe asthma
- If you get an asthma attack more than twice in the night in a month or more than twice during day time in a week, you need continuous treatment
- All asthmatics should be questioned about symptoms triggered by common household allergens, at home, school or work
- Indoor allergens, such as dust mites, animal dander, mould, mice and cockroaches, are of particular importance
- Food allergy rarely causes isolated asthma symptoms, although wheezing and cough can be symptoms of food-induced asthmoids
- Aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs may trigger symptoms of asthma in about 3 to 5% adult asthmatic patients
- Gastric reflux is common among patients with asthma
- Well-controlled asthma means daytime symptoms no more than twice per week and night-time symptoms no more than twice per month

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