

Road traffic pollution increases risk of death for bronchiectasis patients

7 September 2013

Living close to a busy road is associated with a higher risk of death in people with bronchiectasis.

A new study, presented at the European Respiratory Society (ERS) Annual Congress in Barcelona today (8 September 2013), has added to the growing body of evidence demonstrating the damaging effects of road-side pollution.

Bronchiectasis is a condition in which the airways of the lungs become abnormally widened, leading to a build-up of excess mucus. It can be caused by [cystic fibrosis](#) (CF), and experts usually categorise the condition as cases either due to CF or not.

The study investigated the association between the residential distance to a main road and the number of deaths in a group of 189 people with non-CF bronchiectasis between June 2006 and October 2012.

The researchers used hazard ratios to estimate the risk of death. The findings showed that participants were less likely to die from bronchiectasis the further they lived from a major road (hazard ratio 0.36 for every tenfold increase in distance to a major road).

Lead author, Pieter Goeminne, said: "Our results are the first to link [air pollution](#) with the risk of death in people with [bronchiectasis](#) and adds to a number of other studies showing the dangers of living close to a busy road. The findings of this study should encourage policymakers to make air quality a key focus of transport policies and consider the proximity of main roads to residential areas."

European Respiratory Society President, Professor Francesco Blasi, said: "This study has added crucial evidence to our understanding of how living close to a busy road can affect people with poor [lung](#) health. The European Lung White Book provides several key recommendations to help

policymakers address this issue and I would call on EU Member States to make [air quality](#) an integral part of their transport policies."

Provided by European Lung Foundation

APA citation: Road traffic pollution increases risk of death for bronchiectasis patients (2013, September 7) retrieved 25 June 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-09-road-traffic-pollution-death-bronchiectasis.html>

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