Rush-Hour Commuting

Does the Pollution Inside Your Car Affect Your Health?

What did we want to know?

Does the air pollution that gets in your car affect your heart and lungs?

What happens if you have asthma?
What if your asthma isn't under control?

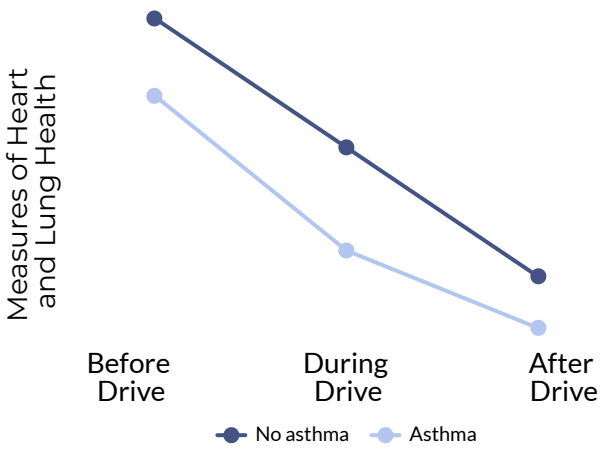
What did we do?

1. 21 adults with asthma & 21 adults without asthma drove pre-planned routes on the highway during rush hour traffic.

2. We measured levels of air pollution inside their cars, and their heart and lung health, before, during, and after.



What did we find?



For some study participants, heart and lung health were worse after the rush-hour commute.

Lung health was even worse for people who didn't have their asthma well-controlled.

What does this mean for you?

It is hard to draw strong conclusions from just one study, but:

Try not to drive during rush hour. If you have to drive during rush hour traffic, keep the windows closed, set the ventilation to recirculate, and use AC if possible.

If you have asthma, managing your asthma will help prevent possible breathing problems related to your commute.

If possible, take the MARTA train. You can also help reduce traffic pollution by trying other ways to commute during rush-hour. Go to Georgia Commute Options for more information.

Mirabelli, M. C., et al. (2015). "Modification of Traffic-related Respiratory Response by Asthma Control in a Population of Car Commuters." Epidemiology 26(4): 546-555.
Sarnat, J. A., et al. (2014). "Exposure to traffic pollution, acute inflammation and autonomic response in a panel of car commuters." Environmental Research 133: 66-76.

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HERCULES is funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (P30ES019776)