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30% increase in asthma patients due to smog: Docs

Sapna Verma | TNN

New Delhi: Even as hazy conditions due to a sharp rise in vehicular pollution continue, the city is seeing a surge in health problems. Said Sanjeev Bagai of Rockland Hospital: "Due to a lowering of temperature and the diurnal range of temperature, more and more patients are complaining about various problems. There is a 30% increase in the number of asthma patients due to smog. And the worst hit are schoolchildren, who go out early morning."

Pollution levels in the city are alarming. Sample these figures taken at Siri Fort on Monday: Sulphur dioxide stood at 19 microgram per cubic metre against the safe limit of 11, Nitric oxide was 92 against a safe limit of 36 and carbon monoxide is 8,695 against a safe limit of 3,164.

Bagai said the common complaints were "upper respiratory problems, lower respiratory problems and allergic manifestation of respiratory problem. If this kind of weather continues for some more days, leave apart the asthmatic patients, even the normal people will develop breathing problems."

Added Nevin Kishore of Max Hospital, "This is the worst time for asthmatics and people who are allergic. Statistics says one out of 10 children in the age group of 5-14 years suffer from asthma. People are advised to cover their faces and necks when they go out and people who are allergic must carry inhalers. My advice is: don't self medicate, consult your doctor if allergy persists for 48 hours."

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