

Annual southeast Asia haze linked to increased respiratory problems

June 20 2018

For more than a decade, Southeast Asia has faced annual haze due to a combination of human activity, natural fires, and climatic factors. A new study published in *Respirology* reveals that the annual haze is associated with increased hospital admissions for respiratory problems.

Respiratory admissions at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Medical Centre were significantly different between haze and non-haze periods in 2014 and 2015, with 27.6 cases per week during the haze periods versus 15.7 cases per week during the non-haze periods. A total of 4% versus 2% of patients were admitted to the [intensive care unit](#) in the haze and the non-haze groups, respectively.

"Green measures including tax breaks, expanding the use of public transportation, energy efficient vehicles and alternative energy sourcing such as solar should be encouraged to control overall air pollution," the authors wrote. "The annual haze which is aggravated by human activities is an important modifiable determinant of local lung health, which in turn will affect the policies by the health ministry to improve [health care services](#) in Malaysia."

More information: Chew R. Ming et al, Annual Southeast Asia haze increases respiratory admissions: A 2-year large single institution experience, *Respirology* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/resp.13325](https://doi.org/10.1111/resp.13325)

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Annual southeast Asia haze linked to increased respiratory problems (2018, June 20)
retrieved 6 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-06-annual-southeast-asia-haze-linked.html>

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