

SOUND

Noise: A Health Hazard

NOISE A HEALTH HAZARD

Exposure to high levels of noise can cause permanent hearing loss. Neither surgery nor a hearing aid can help correct this type of hearing loss. Short term exposure to loud noise can also cause a temporary change in hearing (your ears may feel stuffed up) or a ringing in your ear. Noise pollution impacts millions of people on a daily basis. The most common health problem it causes is Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL). Exposure to loud noise can also cause high blood pressure, heart disease, sleep disturbances, and stress. These health problems can affect all age groups, especially children.

Noise pollution:

The presence of unwanted and unpleasant sounds in the earth's environment is called noise pollution.

Human beings can hear sounds ranging up to 85decibels. Above that, any sound can damage our hearing power.

- The unwanted noise in the environment causes an adverse effect on the health of the organisms on the earth.

Causes of noise pollution:

- Transport noise
- Industrial noise
- Construction noise
- Political activities
- Bursting of crackers and fireworks
- Natural sounds (thunderstorms, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sounds of various animals etc.)

Effects of noise pollution:

- Excessive noise in the environment can lead to serious health problems in human beings such as anxiety, irritation, hypertension, lack of sleep or insomnia, lack of memory, stress, and even nervous breakdown.
- It may cause temporary or permanent **hearing loss** in humans as well as animals.
- Excessive noise may lead to increased blood pressure. It elevates cholesterol levels in the blood and therefore increases the chances of cardiovascular diseases.

Prevention of Noise Pollution:

- Factories and industries should be set up at a distance from **residential areas**.
- **Silencing devices** should be installed in heavy vehicles such as aircraft, industrial equipment, machinery and other home appliances.
- The use of horns should be reduced, especially near public places such as schools, religious places and hospitals.
- **Soundproofing systems** should be installed in party halls, industries and other buildings that produce a huge amount of unwanted sounds.
- The unwanted noise from the environment can be eliminated by planting a huge amount of trees.

Measures to control noise pollution

- (1) We should not play radio, stereo systems and televisions too loudly.
- (2) The horns of motor vehicles should not be gone unnecessarily.
- (3) The bursting of crackers should be avoided.
- (4) The noise making factory and airports should be shifted away from the residential area of the city.
- (5) Loud speakers should be played at low volume during marriages and other social function.
- (6) Trees should be planted along the roads and around building to reduce the noise pollution from the roads.