Global Warming, Health Disparities, and Structural Racism

History of the nations spanning emerging trends and natural health news. Omission of global warming effect on society, epidemic in the absence of environmental health. Sustained rise of automobile and climate change-related conditions. The list can go on. Environmental health is a necessary component of any individual’s and society’s well-being.

According to the recent report, "Climate Change and Health: A Global Assessment of Risks and Responses," by the World Health Organization (WHO), the global warming crisis is the most significant environmental health threat of the 21st century. The report highlights the increasing evidence of climate change impacts on human health, including the exacerbation of existing health problems and the emergence of new ones.

Air pollution, for example, is particularly high in many communities of color, which may be located near factories or highways. This disparity can lead to worse health outcomes for people of color, as they are exposed to higher levels of air pollution than the general population. Similarly, the intersection of climate change and health is particularly acute in communities that are already vulnerable due to factors such as income inequality, poverty, and lack of access to healthcare.

The report also emphasizes the importance of addressing the root causes of climate change to prevent and mitigate its health effects. It highlights the need for policymakers and decision-makers to prioritize climate solutions that are also health solutions, such as transitioning to clean energy sources, improving transportation infrastructure, and supporting equitable development.

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By recognizing that global warming contributes to the emergence of pandemics, and that both of these challenges have strong ties to health disparities, solutions can be designed to maximize positive outcomes for all of them.

The health impacts of global warming, the roots and manifestations of COVID-19 infection, and structural racism are all interrelated. Climate change exacerbates existing health disparities, and the pandemic highlights the need for equitable and resilient solutions.

With the recent advances in our understanding of the Sars-CoV-2 virus, it is also clear that the pandemic has provided a glimpse of what collective, aggressive action can accomplish in short order. In a nod to the intersection of climate change and health, the pandemic, with its possible reflection of the future, has captured the attention of people everywhere.

By recognizing the connections between global warming, health disparities, and structural racism, we can work towards creating a healthier, more equitable, and resilient future for all.

Climate Health Links

National Institutes of Health Climate Change and Health

Joint Task for NIH. NIH Office of Climate Change, Health, and Sustainability process panel meeting


Climate Health Links

The course series will be offered in different formats, including webinars and in-person workshops, and will provide up to 6.5 CEU credits to participants. The course series will focus on the intersection of climate change and health, with a particular emphasis on the health impacts of global warming.

Participants will learn about the latest research and best practices in climate change and health, including the impacts of climate change on mental health, the role of health professionals in addressing climate change, and strategies for reducing emissions and improving health outcomes.

The course series will also feature expert speakers from a range of organizations and disciplines, including public health, medicine, and climate science.

Questions or comments? Contact: karly.hampshire@ucsf.edu

UCSF Climate Health Newsletter

A coalition of health practitioners in the state working to address the climate crisis. The newsletter is the UCSF Co-chair for the upcoming UCSF-Stanford NorCal Symposium on Climate and Pandemic Resilience in Health Care.

Symposium on Climate and Pandemic Resilience in Health Care

The Bay Area Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility has a very active environmental committee, including staff, volunteers, and community partners.

Chelsea Landrinc, RN, MS, NP

Evolving Public Health Strategies for the 21st Century

Chelsea is the UCSF Co-chair for the upcoming UCSF-Stanford NorCal Symposium on Climate and Pandemic Resilience in Health Care.

Chelsea has volunteered in multiple capacities to advance Climate Health efforts at UCSF. In addition to being an avid cyclist and serving as a cycling instructor, Chelsea is a climate change communication specialist with the Office of Sustainability. She has also served as a community bicycle liaison for UCSF and as a bike ambassador for the community of UCSF bicycle commuters. Chelsea serves on the department of community health systems leadership. This effort has created de facto “needs-assessments” for individual medical schools, on which each institution can establish their own “grading” process for climate health. Within this process, UCSF student, Karly Hampshire, and colleagues have gone “live” with institutional results and summaries of intense work on this project. Karly Hampshire, MS3 (MS3) or bennett.kissel@ucsf.edu