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Cleanlink News May 13 2011

Study: HEPA Filters Reduce Risk of Cardiovascular Disease

A study published in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* found that the use of HEPA (high efficiency particle air) filters can reduce the risk of heart and blood vessel disease. The researchers found that the HEPA filters reduce the amount of airborne particulate matter in the air. Doing so results in improved blood flow and reduced risk of cardiovascular disease.

The tests involved 45 adults and were conducted in 25 Canadian homes over a two-week period. HEPA filtration systems were added to the homes heating and HVAC systems. Concentrations of airborne particulates in the homes were measured before the test and most of the homes were found to have relatively low concentrations. The researchers wanted to know if reducing these concentrations even further would have health benefits.

"Specifically, the researchers were measuring for what is called reactive hyperemia," says Gary Pelphrey, marketing director for Powr-Flite. "In the simplest of terms, reduced reactive hyperemia means that the blood vessels are somehow impaired or restricted. This can have negative health repercussions over time," he says.

After analyzing the data, the researchers found that the HEPA filters reduced the concentration of fine airborne particulates by 60 percent. There was also an associated increase of 9.4 percent in reactive hyperemia, meaning blood flow improved, potentially reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease.

"This is important information for cleaning professionals who use vacuum cleaners every day in their work," says Pelphrey. "It adds to the evidence that HEPA filtration on vacuum cleaners is not only a greener way to clean, but a healthier way to clean as well."

Because of the health benefits, Pelphrey also advises cleaning professionals take HEPA a step further and look for true-HEPA vacuums.

"Airborne contaminants can escape through the casing of the machine. With a true-HEPA vacuum cleaner, the casing is airtight, providing even greater health protection."

Source: Based on material provided by the American Thoracic Society, which focuses on respiratory health. Findings were first reported in January 2011.

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