

The Impact of Heat Waves on Human Health: State of Art in Italy

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Abstract : The earth system is subject to a wide range of human activities that have changed the ecosystem more rapidly and extensively in the last five decades. These global changes have a large impact on human health. The relationship between extreme weather events and mortality are widely documented in different studies. In particular, a number of studies have investigated the relationship between climatological variations and the cardiovascular and respiratory system. The researchers have become interested in the evaluation of the effect of environmental variations on the occurrence of different diseases (such as infarction, ischemic heart disease, asthma, respiratory problems, etc.) and mortality. Among changes in weather conditions, the heat waves have been used for investigating the association between weather conditions and cardiovascular events and cerebrovascular, using thermal indices, which combine air temperature, relative humidity, and wind speed. The effects of heat waves on human health are mainly found in the urban areas and they are aggravated by the presence of atmospheric pollution. The consequences of these changes for human health are of growing concern. In particular, meteorological conditions are one of the environmental aspects because cardiovascular diseases are more common among the elderly population, and such people are more sensitive to weather changes. In addition, heat waves, or extreme heat events, are predicted to increase in frequency, intensity, and duration with climate change. In this context, are very important public health and climate change connections increasingly being recognized by the medical research, because these might help in informing the public at large. Policy experts claim that a growing awareness of the relationships of public health and climate change could be a key in breaking through political logjams impeding action on mitigation and adaptation. The aims of this study are to investigate about the importance of interactions between weather variables and your effects on human health, focusing on Italy. Also highlighting the need to define strategies and practical actions of monitoring, adaptation and mitigation of the phenomenon.

Keywords : climate change, illness, Italy, temperature, weather

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