

Expanding the Role of the Environment in the Global Burden of Disease

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The Global Burden of Disease (GBD) has estimated the contribution of several environmental exposures, including particulate matter and ozone, radon, drinking water and sanitation, lead, and a number of occupational exposures, to the burden of disease from health outcomes for which causal criteria are met. The process for including exposure-outcome pairs in GBD estimates is not well known to most environmental epidemiologists, however. Further, most epidemiologists are not aware of how they could present their findings to facilitate inclusion in GBD calculations and thus increase their public health impact. Additionally, the possibility of including additional environmental exposures in future GBD estimates is of considerable interest to the environmental epidemiology research community, including funding agencies. This symposium will include perspectives from individuals responsible for the ongoing work of the GBD, those who have participated in previous GBD analysis of environmental epidemiology data, and consumers of GBD analyses. We will also discuss the new Global Burden of Disease-Pollution and Health Initiative (GBD-PHI), recently begun with the aim of improving GBD estimates and also accelerating the inclusion of additional exposures into the GBD.

The ISEE2019 meeting theme is On Airs, Waters, Places. The proposed symposium aims to increase the public health impact of environmental epidemiology studies addressing these general areas. The symposium is designed to increase understanding of the Global Burden of Disease by environmental epidemiologists. It will address how this program works, how exposure outcome-pairs are chosen, assessing air pollution and climate change in the GBD, and how the inclusion of environmental exposures in this important public health project might be increased. Attendees will learn how their research reporting can be made more amenable to inclusion in this important activity.