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Cases of injuries and deaths might increase due to climate change: Study

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Unusual temperature fluctuations resulting from climate change can lead to 2135 additional injury-related deaths each year in the US as predicted by a study which was carried out by researchers from Imperial College London, Columbia, and Harvard.

According to The Verge, the association between drastic temperature fluctuations and injury risks is still not understood yet, but researchers believe that the estimates reached upon by their study can help prevent such instances in the future.

The topic of the association between climate change and injuries has mostly been ignored till now and previous academic works were mostly focussed upon heat illnesses and mosquito-borne diseases.

The study which was published in the Nature Medicine journal took into consideration deaths from unintentional injuries due to reasons such as drowning, falls and car accidents. It also analyzed cases of suicide and assault that come under the category of intentionally inflicted injuries that highlight the importance of

mental [health](#) in the current milieu of climate change. The Verge also reported that another study found that rates of suicide went up in the US and Mexico during the months that saw higher than usual temperatures.

Robbie Parks, a lead author of the study and postdoctoral research fellow at Columbia told The Verge that-- "[The study] highlights how important mental [health](#) is as a hidden burden of not just climate change, but environmental exposures in general."

He also emphasized the need for further research that looks into the association between mental [health](#) and rise in temperature-- "Our results show that there may well be something there, particularly in younger people."

It is still not clear why suicides and injuries follow an upward trend during temperature fluctuations.

Probably, drowning cases might be related to people cooling off by swimming in hotter times. Also, hot weather appears to cause agitation that compels people to take up alcohol as a coping mechanism, thus leading to an increased risk for violence and assault cases. Research has also revealed a positive correlation between violent crimes and high temperatures.

While on the other hand, cold weather makes old people vulnerable to falling and getting injured.

The research also reveals that a majority of abnormal temperature-related deaths are caused by vehicle injuries, followed by suicide.

Drowning fatalities might see the highest proportional increase to the magnitude of 14 percent. Males between the ages of 15 and 34 would be the most susceptible to dying and American states of California, Texas, and Florida would face the biggest brunt.

The researchers reached these figures by analyzing the number of injury-related deaths in the US (sparing Hawaii and Alaska) from 1980 to 2017 and comparing them against abnormal temperature fluctuations every month.

(This story has not been edited by Business Standard staff and is auto-generated from a syndicated feed.)

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