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## Cleaning sprays linked to asthma

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*The use of household cleaning sprays could be contributing to a rise in cases of asthma, a leading health expert has warned.*

Chlorine, bleach, disinfectants and other cleaning agents can spark asthma and worsen existing symptoms. Jan-Paul Zock, from the Centre for Research in Environmental Epidemiology in Barcelona, said.

While addressing a European allergy conference in London, he also warned that professional cleaners and health workers who use products in hospitals are particularly vulnerable.

Zock said that previous studies had already found higher rates of asthma among caretakers, cleaners, housekeepers and nurses.

Inhaling bleach, ammonia, decalcifiers, acids, solvents and stain removers more than once a week was linked to a 20 per cent rise in asthma or wheezing, the expert said.

People who frequently use cleaning products are most at risk, as are those who use them for long periods. The strength of a product, in addition to room ventilation, also affect the risk.

Zock said that more studies were needed to be done on people's exposure at home, which can be difficult to track.

However, he said, many people at home could be at risk.

"The number of people at risk is very large," the Scotsman quoted Zock as saying.

"We need to consider the ubiquitous use of cleaning products at home," he added.

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