Contribution of various microenvironments to the daily personal exposure to ultrafine particles - DTU Orbit (27/10/2019)

Contribution of various microenvironments to the daily personal exposure to ultrafine particles: Personal monitoring coupled with GPS tracking

Exposure to ultrafine particles (UFP) may have adverse health effects. Central monitoring stations do not represent the personal exposure to UFP accurately. Few studies have previously focused on personal exposure to UFP. Sixty non-smoking residents living in Copenhagen, Denmark were asked to carry a backpack equipped with a portable monitor, continuously recording particle number concentrations (PN), in order to measure the real-time individual exposure over a period of similar to 48 h. A GPS logger was carried along with the particle monitor and allowed us to estimate the contribution of UFP exposure occurring in various microenvironments (residence, during active and passive transport, other indoor and outdoor environments) to the total daily exposure. On average, the fractional contribution of each microenvironment to the daily integrated personal exposure roughly corresponded to the fractions of the day the subjects spent in each microenvironment. The home environment accounted for 50% of the daily personal exposure. Indoor environments other than home or vehicles contributed with similar to 40%. The highest median UFP concentration was obtained during passive transport (vehicles). However, being in transit or outdoors contributed 5% or less to the daily exposure. Additionally, the subjects recorded in a diary the periods when they were at home. With this approach, 66% of the total daily exposure was attributable to the home environment. The subjects spent 28% more time at home according to the diary, compared to the GPS. These results may indicate limitations of using diaries, but also possible inaccuracy and miss-classification in the GPS data. (C) 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.