Connections Between Climate Change and Health

Climate change is not only making our world hotter, but also, more dangerous. It is not simply an issue of rising temperatures, but actually, a threat to our health.

Temperature-Related Illness
Cities across the Southeast are experiencing more and longer summer heat waves. These increased temperatures can result in heat stroke, respiratory problems, and even death.

Infection and Disease
Increase in extreme precipitation and sea level rise result in more contaminated water, increasing the number of waterborne diseases.

Warmer environments allow ticks and mosquitoes, vectors that carry disease, to live in new areas and be active for longer periods; therefore, infecting more people.

Air Quality Impacts
In the Southeast, vehicle and power plant emissions, wildfires, and airborne allergens result in poor air quality.

As the urban areas in this region grow, the number of allergens and carbon pollution also increases, resulting in more allergies, and exacerbation of respiratory diseases, such as asthma.

Extreme Weather
Virginia’s Hampton Roads region is experiencing the highest rates of sea level rise along the entire Atlantic seaboard.

Storm surge and related flooding can cause direct injury and impact transportation infrastructure, preventing access to healthcare facilities, not to mention, serious consequences to mental health.

Populations of Concern
Marginalized communities are impacted the most from environmental harm. For example, people in lower-income households are more likely to experience street flooding.

Due to environmental racism, communities of color are more heavily burdened by climate impacts, as their environments are left unprotected with fewer resources.