

One thing we have learnt this week – particulates travel

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Particulates travel. That's the news this week. Its how they travel that is surprising research conducted in Leeds has shown. Researchers monitored commuters travels by cycle, bus, car and walking. Some of the results are not surprising. For example its been known for years that cyclists imbibe less particulates than motorists. In addition those travelling by bike were faster than any other mode of transport. There's a surprise. However the big surprise for me was that the pedestrians imbibed the most particulates. Its not even close. The difference would be highly statistically significant. The reason of course makes common sense. The pedestrians took the longest so their exposure is the greatest. The cyclist took the least time so their exposure is the lowest. Driving an electric vehicle of course does not save you either. Again this is logical you are breathing in others particulates and electric vehicles still produce about 50% of oil powered ones anyway. Particulates travel but not very far. Even turning down a quiet side street cuts your exposure massively (about 90% I seem to remember). So for pedestrians choosing your route is massively important. All this shows we need a wholesale shift in modes of transport. We know that particulates and NOX harm almost every organ in the body now. Getting people walking is a start but unless they use quiet routes they could end up poisoning themselves. Only getting people out of cars and getting them to use other modes of transport will cut it. Neil

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