

What Are Negative Ions?

In the last two decades a medical controversy has evolved pertaining to the beneficial effects of minute electrical particles called "ions." As with anything that appears to affect people in a beneficial sense, there are those who sensationalize and exaggerate these claims as a cure for all ailments and ills. Such people manufacture and market devices under false pretenses, and consequently give the products an adverse name. The FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION now steps in on these claims, and the product along with its beneficial properties goes down the tubes. The reader may wish to obtain the following articles: NEGATIVE IONS AFFECT HEALTH - OCT. 22, 1976; INT'L PRESS RELEASE: IONS - Oct., 1960; ROTARIAN, Oct., 1960; READERS DIGEST, NEGATIVE IONS, POPULAR ELECTRONICS, Sept. 1961.

People are beneficially effected by negative ions by their property of increasing the rate of cilia activity, which keeps the trachea clean from foreign objects, thus enhancing oxygen intake and increasing the flow of mucus. Negative ions also help to neutralize the effects of cigarette smoking that slows down cilia activity. Hay fever and bronchial asthma victims are greatly relieved by these particles. Burn and surgery patients are relieved of pain and heal faster.

Tiredness, lethargy and the general dragged-out feeling are replaced by a sense of well-being and renewed energy. Negative ions destroy bacteria and purify the air with country air freshness. They cheer people up by decreasing the serotonin content of the blood. As can be seen in countless articles and technical writings, negative ions are a benefit to man and his environment.

Negative ions occur naturally from static electricity, certain winds, waterfalls, crashing surf, cosmic radiation, radioactivity and ultraviolet radiation. Positive ions are also produced from some of these phenomena and they usually neutralize each other out as a natural statistical occurrence. However, many man-made objects and devices have a tendency to neutralize the negative ions, thus leaving an abundance of positive ions which create sluggishness and most of the opposite physiological effects of its negative counterpart.

One method of producing negative ions is obtaining a radioactive source rich in beta radiations (electrons negative). Alpha and Gamma emission from this source produce positive ions that are neutralized electrically. The resulting negative Ions are electrostatically directed to the output exit of the device and further dispersed by the action of a fan (this method has recently come under attack by the BUREAU OF RADIOLOGICAL HEALTH AND WELFARE for the use of tritium or other radioactive salts). This approach appears to be the more hazardous of the two according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission.