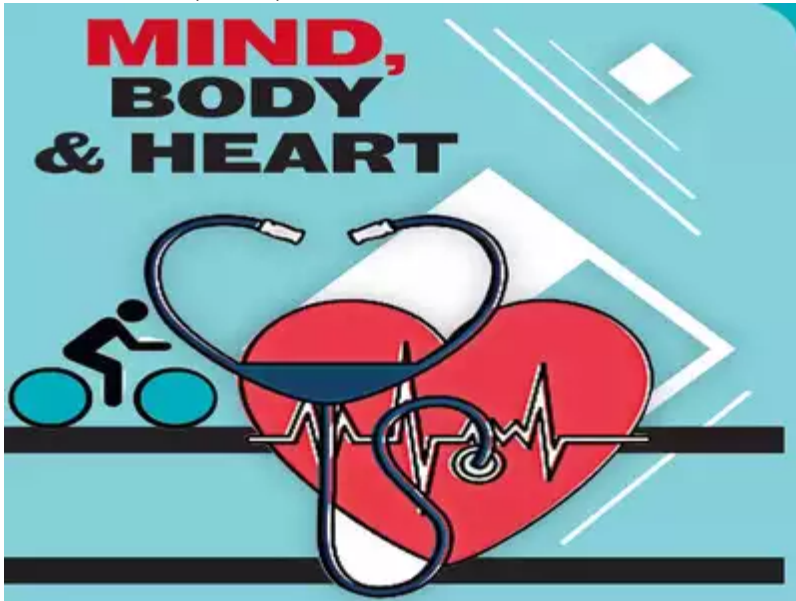


Mind, Body & Heart

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Boost to creativity

Good indoor air quality is not only beneficial for your lungs but will also boost your creativity levels, according to a study.

Long-term effect

Scientists at Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore have found that high levels of volatile organic compounds -- gases from common indoor products such as detergents, pesticides, perfumes, aerosol sprays and paint -- may affect your creativity at work affects people's creativity.

Volatile compounds

Using a statistical analysis, the team estimated that reducing total volatile organic compounds (TVOC) by 72% could improve a student's creative potential by 12 per cent. TVOC is an indicator that refers to the volume of volatile organic compounds in the air.

Indoor VOCs are emitted from interior decoration sources such as paints and carpets and household products such as detergents and air fresheners.

Importance of air quality

The findings shed light on the importance of indoor air quality on our creative cognition, said the research team led by Assistant Professor Ng Bing Feng and Associate Professor Wan Man Pun, Cluster Directors for Smart and Sustainable Building Technologies at the NTU's Energy Research Institute.

Impact on mind

"While most people would correctly associate indoor air quality with effects on the lungs, our study shows that it could also have an impact on the mind and creative cognition, or the ability to use knowledge in an unconventional way. Our findings suggest that low TVOC levels, even well within the accepted threshold, could impact an individual's creative potential," Ng said.