

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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*For immediate use*

### **HIGHER RISK OF HOSPITALISATION FROM LIVING NEAR HEATHROW**

Exposure to aircraft noise in the late evening and during the night may be associated with increased risk of cardiovascular hospitalisations and deaths in the population living under Heathrow flight paths, fresh evidence from researchers led by Imperial College London, published in *Environmental International*, found (1).

The study found evidence of a small increase in risk for 10 decibels increment in noise during the previous evening particularly from 22:00-23:00 and the early morning for all cardiovascular disease admission. Similarly, it found evidence of an increase in risk associated with noise during the previous night for admissions due to stroke. This comes during a particularly poor period for Heathrow's late evening schedules, with night after night of extremely late-running flights.

After stratifying by age and sex, the effect of aircraft noise on cardiovascular admissions was statistically significant in men over the age of 65 during the previous evening, specifically during 19:00-22:00 and 22:00-23:00.

The last scheduled flight at Heathrow departs at 22:50 but in recent weeks there have been hundreds of departures after 23:00 and some later than 01:00. Just a couple of nights ago (19 June), residents of west London were kept up with 20 late running departures between 22:50 and 00:10, culminating with a deafening A380 en-route to Doha, passing over their houses at around 00:10. Arrivals begin over parts of London from as early at 04:15.

The study captured roughly 6.3 million people and 155,000 postcodes with one postcode encompassing an average of 22 households occupied by 53 residents.

The research noted that "environmental noise is associated with an increased risk of sleep disturbance and general annoyance, and there are good mechanistic pathways by which this may damage the vascular system including vascular oxidative stress and activation of the sympathetic nervous system, which may lead to the acute onset of a cardiovascular event."

Increased risk associated with different levels of variability in aircraft noise may further suggest high predictability in health impact of noise exposure over time.

A Government consultation on long-term night flights policy from October 2025 is expected later this year.

**Paul McGuinness, Chair of the No 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway Coalition, said:**

*“Plenty of research in the past has reached similar conclusions, and the deleterious health impacts inflicted by Heathrow is always greater than at comparable airports because it lies bang slap in the middle of our country’s most densely populated residential region, with each plane overflying many more people.*

*“Mitigations that one would think necessary are not in place. The angle of climb of Heathrow departures is much lower than at comparable airports, so unnecessarily increasing the number of those adversely affected.*

*“And at Heathrow, provided a flight has been formally scheduled to an earlier slot, it can still fly well into the night, causing sleep deprivation at the most critical hours of the day.”*

ENDS.

Notes:

1. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160412023002891>