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The Negative Effects of Water Pollution on Human Health.

Water is a basic human need required for drinking, cooking, and cleaning. It is also heavily used in industry, agriculture, and electricity. While the importance of water is undeniable, many companies and people continue to pollute our oceans, rivers, and lakes with harmful toxins and contaminants. In turn, water pollution has become a major crisis in countries across the globe, affecting millions of people worldwide.

Water pollution may pose serious threat to the environment as well as lives. Pollutant effects may vary depending on their types and source. For instance, while heavy metals, dyes, and some other organic pollutants have been identified as carcinogens, hormones, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics and personal care product wastes are known as endocrine disruptive chemicals. These pollutants, which enter into the water body through various channel but predominantly anthropogenic, have become a great concern to environmentalists due to various hazard they pose on the environment.

Water pollution has many causes, starting with rapid urban development. As houses and roads are built and factories grow, many people will dump their waste into bodies of water, causing pollution. In homes, families are guilty of contributing to pollution by pouring detergents and chemicals down toilets and drains. Other common causes of water pollution include the use of harmful fertilizers by farmers, improper sewage disposal, discharge of radioactive wastes, oil spills, and throwing plastics in the ocean.

The Effects of Water Pollution On Human Health.

The effects of water pollution on human health have been well documented. Polluted water contributes to water scarcity in many countries that do not have the systems in place to enforce against it. This causes many men, women, and children in third-world countries like Africa to be exposed to polluted water on a day-to-day basis. This then forces countless families to regularly consume contaminated water, often leading to illness. Some of the negative effects of drinking polluted water include:

- Traveler's Diarrhea

This common digestive tract disorder can cause abdominal cramps and loose stools. While this condition is usually not life-threatening, it can be unpleasant. For many people in Africa who drink contaminated food or drink, bouts of traveler's diarrhea are common. In young children, this condition can cause a high fever, persistent vomiting, bloody stools, and possibly unresponsiveness.

- Cholera

Cholera is a bacterial disease that is generally spread in polluted water. This serious condition results in an estimated 95,000 deaths each year according to the CDC. While the infection can sometimes present with mild or no symptoms at all, about one in 10 infected persons will experience symptoms like vomiting, leg cramps, and profuse watery diarrhea.

- Dysentery

Dysentery is the inflammation of the intestines and is often accompanied by bloody diarrhea. The condition may be caused by a virus, parasite, or bacteria, often found in contaminated water. Symptoms usually appear about 1 to 3 days following the infection and can include cramping, diarrhea, and stomach pain.

- Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious liver infection that can be transferred through the consumption of contaminated food or water. The most common symptoms of

this condition include fatigue, stomach pain, low appetite, nausea, and jaundice. Most cases of hepatitis A resolve on their own within two months.

- Parasitic Infections

Harmful parasites found in contaminated water can be ingested, causing serious infections in the body. Parasitic infections can cause a range of unpleasant gastrointestinal symptoms like an upset stomach and diarrhea. These infections can also result in dehydration, weight loss, and flu-like symptoms.

- Botulism

Botulism is a type of rare poisoning caused by a toxin known as Clostridium botulinum. The bacteria can cause paralysis that begins in the face and spreads to the limbs. If the condition is allowed to spread and paralyzes the muscles used for breathing, respiratory failure can occur.

- Typhoid Fever

Typhoid fever is a serious condition typically spread by contaminated food or water. Symptoms include high fever, stomach pain, weakness, loss of appetite, and headache. While rare, internal bleeding and death can occur.