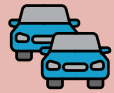


Air Pollution: What Can We Do?

Where does pollution come from?

Air pollution comes from many sources.



Vehicles



Wildfires



Extreme Heat



Buildings

How can we prevent pollution?

Individuals, schools, communities and governments can reduce air pollution.



Use Alternative Forms of Transportation



Prevent and Manage Wildfires



Plant Trees and other "Green Infrastructure"



Reduce Pollution from Buildings

What is air pollution?

It's made of ground-level ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide.

How can I protect myself from air pollution?

There are actions you should take when the AQI is high.



Use an air purifier



Wear a mask



Talk to your doctor



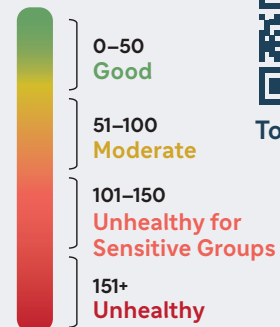
Reduce physical activity outdoors

Air Quality Index (AQI) & Health Effects

AQI is a measurement of how much pollution is in the air at a specific place and time. Most people don't need to change their behavior unless the AQI is rated as **"Unhealthy."** However, some people are more sensitive to air pollution than others, and will need to protect themselves when the level is **"Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups."**

Factors that can make someone a part of the "Sensitive Group":

- Being under age 18
- Being over age 65
- Having an existing heart or respiratory condition
- Having diabetes



Today's AQI

This pollution is harmful to your health. High levels of air pollution can...



cause inflammation and physically damage **brain** cells, which decreases attention and memory and may increase the risk of dementia.



pass through your lungs into your bloodstream, making your blood thicker and increasing your risk of **heart** disease and high blood pressure.



irritate your lungs, leading to coughing and sneezing, reduced **lung** capacity, and increasing your risk of asthma, COPD, and lung cancer.



have a worse impact on **children's health** due to their developing respiratory and immune systems, faster breathing, and lower body weight.

Air Pollution: What Can We Do? cont.

Where does pollution come from?



How can we prevent pollution?



Vehicles

Cars, trucks, planes, and other forms of transportation that run on gasoline or diesel produce pollutants.



Use Alternative Forms of Transportation

Reduce the use of vehicles that run on gasoline or diesel. Try carpooling, walking, biking, and using public transportation or electric vehicles (including buses).



Wildfires

Wildfires produce smoke that can pollute the air, even thousands of miles away. Wildfires are becoming more frequent over time and are starting to occur in parts of the country that did not have wildfires in the recent past.



Prevent and Manage Wildfires

Remove flammable materials from areas near buildings to prevent fires from starting. Support prescribed burns and invest in fire crews, equipment, and early detection technology to help stop fires from spreading.



Extreme Heat

On hot, sunny days, the pollutants that are already in the air react with sunlight to form a harmful type of pollution called ground-level ozone. Extreme heat events are becoming more common over time.



Plant Trees and “Green Infrastructure”

Trees can reduce air pollution and help to protect people from the direct health effects of extreme heat by creating shade and reducing the temperature.



Buildings

Buildings use a lot of electricity for heating and cooling, lighting, and many other things we do inside. This electricity is often produced by power plants that use things like coal, natural gas, or petroleum—all of which contribute to air pollution.



Reduce Pollution from Buildings

Improve energy efficiency, install electric appliances, and prioritize the use of clean energy (e.g., solar, wind, and hydropower) to reduce pollution created to power buildings.

How can I protect myself from air pollution?

There are actions you should take when the AQI is high.



Use an air purifier

Air pollution from outdoors can also come inside buildings. Add MERV 13+ filters to HVAC systems and buy an air purifier that uses HEPA filtration to remove dangerous particles from the air.



Talk to Your Doctor

Having regular check-ups with your doctor can help with diagnosing and treating any issues early. You can also ask your doctor for further advice about how best to protect yourself from pollution.



Reduce physical activity outdoors

When the air quality is poor, any activity that makes you breathe more quickly increases the amount of pollution that enters your body. Exercise indoors if possible, or choose lighter forms of exercise for a shorter period of time.



Wear a mask

Choose an authentic N95 or KN95 mask and ensure that it fits your face properly. Cloth masks, surgical masks, and masks that do not fit your face properly will not protect you from pollutants.