

Healthy Heart

A healthier environment for healthier hearts



epa.gov/healthyheart

Have Heart Disease?

Steps You Can Take to Reduce Health Effects from Air Pollution

Studies show that air pollution can trigger heart attacks, strokes and worsen heart failure in people who are at risk for these conditions. If you have a heart condition, you could benefit by reducing your exposure to high levels of air pollution.

Air Pollution Levels can be high

- Any time of year
- When weather is calm
- Near busy roads
- In urban areas
- In industrial areas
- When there is smoke

Are you at risk?

Greater risk if you have or have had:

- Coronary artery disease
- Angina (chest pain)
- A heart attack
- Bypass surgery or an angioplasty
- Heart failure
- An internal cardiac defibrillator
- A stroke or transient ischemic attack
- Blockages in the arteries of the neck or legs

Check the AQI Daily

Check current pollution forecasts and reports that use the Air Quality Index (AQI)

- On local TV, radio or newspapers
- On the Internet at airnow.gov
- Through the AirNow app for iPhone and Android phones
- Through free e-mail alerts at enviroflash.info

The AQI is a simple color scale that tells you how clean or polluted the air is and provides an advisory health message.



Air quality levels are	Health Message
Good	None
Moderate	Unusually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	People with heart disease should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion
Unhealthy	People with heart disease should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion
Very Unhealthy	People with heart disease should avoid all physical activity outdoors
Hazardous	People with heart disease should remain indoors and keep activity levels low



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Steps to Protect Your Heart

When pollution is high, you can reduce the amount of particle pollution you inhale

- Delay your outdoor activity until the air is cleaner
- Reduce your activity level (for example, go for a walk instead of a jog)
- Move your exercise inside
- Avoid exercising near busy roads

To learn more, visit: www.airnow.gov

Reduce Your Risk

Reduce your overall risk of heart disease and stroke

- Eat healthy foods
- Control blood pressure
- Control cholesterol levels
- Exercise more (first check with your health care provider)
- Stop smoking
- Take aspirin and heart medication as directed
- Talk to your health care provider about treatment

Warning Signs of a Heart Attack

- Chest discomfort (uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing, or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back)
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body (pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach)
- Shortness of breath
- Other signs may include breaking out in cold sweats, nausea, or light-headedness

Warning Signs of a Stroke

- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg (especially on one side of the body)
- Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Problems seeing
- Dizziness, loss of balance or coordination, or trouble walking
- Severe headache with no known cause

For more information, visit
www.heart.org
www.millionhearts.hhs.gov
epa.gov/research/airscience/air-cardiovascular.htm

Learn more about preventing heart attacks and stroke at:
www.cdc.gov/heartdisease
www.cdc.gov/stroke