

Protecting Yourself from Adverse Health Effects of Smoke

Smoke from fires can be just as dangerous as the flames themselves. Here are recommendations on how to keep yourself and your family safe from the effects of smoke.

Pay attention to local air quality reports and stay alert for any news reports or health warnings related to smoke. Air quality reports are based on data from local air quality monitors.

Use common sense. If it looks smoky outside, avoid physical activity outdoors. Do not let your children play outside.

If you are advised to stay indoors, keep indoor air as clean as possible. Keep your windows and doors closed unless it is extremely hot outside.

Run your air conditioner, if you have one. Keep the fresh-air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent bringing smoke inside.

If you don't have an air conditioner, staying inside with windows closed may be dangerous in extremely hot weather. Seek alternate shelter.

When indoors, avoid using:

- wood-burning fireplaces
- gas logs
- gas stoves
- cigarettes or other lighted tobacco products
- candles
- vacuum cleaners

If you have asthma or another lung disease, make sure you follow your doctor's directions about taking your medications and following your asthma management plan. Call your doctor if your symptoms worsen.

If you have a heart or lung disease, are an older adult, or if you have children, talk with your doctor about whether and when you should leave the area.