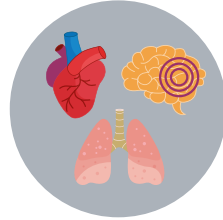


The air you breathe affects your health

Air pollution is harmful to your health and the environment. Clean air is important both indoors and outdoors, particularly if you have asthma.

Air pollution occurs when the air around us becomes contaminated by substances such as smoke, fumes, dust, or chemicals. It can happen both indoors and outdoors and can affect people at every stage of life. Even those who are otherwise healthy may experience health impacts over time. Cleaner air leads to lower pollution levels and better health for everyone.

How does air pollution affect our health?



Air pollution can harm our lungs, hearts and brains.



Even if we feel fit and healthy, exposure to air pollution will increase our risk of developing a range of health conditions later in life.



Children, older people, pregnant women, and people with existing health conditions are most vulnerable to air pollution.



Exposure to air pollution can make us unwell by triggering existing illnesses, such as asthma.

Air pollution and asthma

Air pollution is closely linked to asthma and can trigger symptoms and hospital visits.

If you or your child has asthma:

- Have an up-to-date asthma action plan
- Know how to use inhalers correctly
- Get an annual asthma review
- Use your preventer as prescribed and always carry your reliever.



This leaflet explains simple steps you can take to reduce your exposure to air pollution.

Clean air indoors

Small changes can help make your home a cleaner, healthier place.

Cooking

- Open windows and use an extractor fan when cooking
- Cover pans, keep grills clean and use less oil
- Take care not to burn foods, but if you do, open a window.

Heating

- Avoid using wood or coal for heating or cooking indoors
- Make sure your gas boiler is checked and serviced routinely, and that exhaust gases are not entering your property.

Cleaning products and sprays

- Avoid high-chemical products like bleach, disinfectant and glass or furniture polish. If you do use them, open a window
- Where possible, choose fragrance-free products – in many cases, warm water and soap will work
- Avoid air fresheners and aerosols where you can
- Choose liquid or solid scents and deodorants instead of aerosol products.

Smoking

- Stop or reduce smoking and ask smokers not to smoke inside or near your home.

Candles and incense

- Avoid burning scented or paraffin candles or incense. Open a window if you do.

Damp and black mould (mould that forms from condensation and water vapour)

- Open windows or use extractor fans when boiling water or showering
- Avoid drying clothes on radiators where possible.

Furniture and decorating

- Avoid furnishings which contain chemical glues. Avoid leather, pressed wood products and materials containing 'formaldehyde' – solid wood furnishings are likely to be safer
- Choose low-VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) or non-toxic paints and varnish
- Ventilate well after decorating or buying new furniture.

Clean air outdoors

You can also reduce exposure when out and about.

Travel

- Walk, cycle or use public transport rather than driving. Air pollution is worse inside vehicles than outside
- Choose quieter routes away from traffic
- Turn off your engine when parked or stopped at the side of the road.

Food and fires

- Avoid being near to barbeques, fire pits and cooking areas (either indoors or outside), especially if you have asthma or other health conditions (especially charcoal grills, pizza ovens, and deep fat fryers)
- Avoid burning garden waste.

Fireworks

- If you have asthma, consider avoiding firework displays or bonfires
- Use your preventer and carry your reliever if attending.

Shops using chemicals

- Reduce time spent in places where chemicals are used such as nail salons or dry cleaners.

