

RESPIRATORY HEALTH

Respiratory illnesses are diseases of the lungs and airways.

Examples

- COPD
- Asthma
- Emphysema
- Chronic Bronchitis
- Pneumonia

COPD is the 4th Leading Cause of Death in the U.S.

25 million people in the U.S. have Asthma

Common Risk Factors:

Tobacco Smoke



Air Pollution



Occupational Chemicals



[49% of participants in a health study at Thresholds reported at least one respiratory health condition.]

POVERTY, AIR QUALITY & RESPIRATORY HEALTH

- Air quality is one of the most important aspects of respiratory health.
- Those living in poverty have increased rates of respiratory illness, often linked to poor air quality.
- Environmental racism negatively affects land prices in communities where people of color live. This has led to increased air pollution from factories, highways, overpasses, chemical plants, and more in these communities.

↓
Decreased Air Quality

=

↑
Increased Respiratory Illness

[Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) experience environmental hazards at higher rates than White people. This is called environmental racism.]

ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM & HEALTH

A 2010 study showed, people of color had

37% higher exposure levels to the air pollutant, NO2

Environmental racism increases:

- NO2 gets in the air from the burning of fuel used in cars, trucks, buses, & power plants
- Asthma-related hospitalizations
- Exposure to cancer-causing chemicals in the air
- Lead poisoning, mold exposure, & more

Fight for Environmental Justice!

Environmental Justice initiatives are working to protect the places

"Where we Live, Work, Play, Learn, & Pray"

to help make sure all people, regardless of race and income, are protected from environmental health hazards.

Get Involved:

Learn More About Environmental Racism

Fight for Individuals Impacted by Environmental Racism

Support Public Policies that Protect the Environment

SUPPORTING RESPIRATORY HEALTH

The Best Way to Support Respiratory Health is to Understand Your Triggers

Common Triggers



First & Secondhand Smoke



Mold & Mildew



Pet Dander



Dust & Pest Droppings

Tips to Combat Triggers

- Avoid breathing in **cigarette smoke**, especially indoors.
- Keep areas clear of **pet dander, bug/pest droppings** and other clutter.
- Try to use **dust-proof pillow cases**.
- If possible, **wash cloth materials like curtains, rugs, and blankets** monthly.
- Ask your doctor about using a **de-humidifier, humidifier or air purifier** (one may be covered by your insurance).
- Stay **hydrated!**

[Understand Your Risk!]

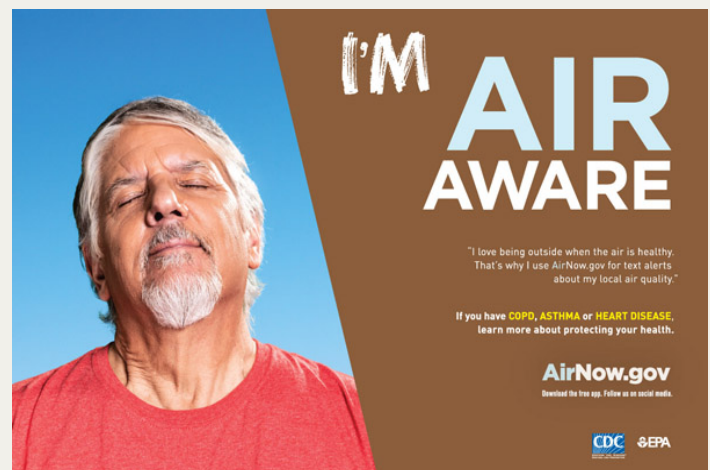
COVID-19 causes respiratory distress and may be more severe in those who have respiratory illnesses. Be aware of your risk and follow all recommended safety precautions!

Be "Air Aware"

- The CDC recommends you check the **Air Quality Index** in your area, especially if you have a respiratory illness like asthma or COPD.
- If your air quality is bad (over 100), you may want to **avoid doing activities outdoors** that require extra breathing, like running or jogging.



You can check your air quality at airnow.gov



Thresholds Health Literacy Center



Project funded by NIDILRR/ACL #90DPHF0001

Sources:

Sinha, I. P., Lee, A. R., Bennett, D., McGeehan, L., Abrams, E. M., Mayell, S. J., Harwood, R., Hawcutt, D. B., Gilchrist, F. J., Auth, M., Simba, J. M., & Taylor-Robinson, D. C. (2020). Child poverty, food insecurity, and respiratory health during the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Lancet. Respiratory medicine*, 8(8), 762–763. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600\(20\)30280-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600(20)30280-0)

Mohai, P., Pellow, D., & Timmons, J.R., (2009). Annual Review of Environment and Resources, *Environmental Justice*, 34(405), 405-430. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-082508-094348>

Mayo Clinic (2020), *Asthma*. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/asthma/diagnosis-treatment/drc-2036966C>