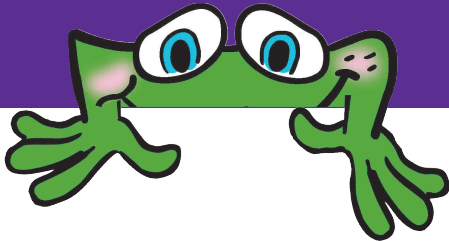


LOOK LOOK LOOK



WHAT IS IT? Air pollution refers to air that is contaminated by particles and/or noxious gases, such as those produced by the combustion of petroleum-based fuels used in cars, trucks, other equipment and industry. Ozone – another respiratory irritant – is created when exhaust fumes combine in the presence of sunlight.

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Air pollution can **decrease lung function and impact the cardiovascular, immune and respiratory systems.**

Air pollution is linked to **sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)** and to **heart disease in the elderly.**

Childhood asthma rates have more than doubled in the last twenty years. Air pollution can worsen symptoms of asthma (such as wheezing and coughing). Poor air quality affects **children, the elderly and the chronically ill as well.**

WHERE IS IT?

Air pollution exists both indoors and outdoors. **Outdoors, fine particle pollution from burning fuels occurs year-round.** Ozone pollution is more prevalent during hot summer days and seasonal allergens often add to the problem.

Indoor air pollution can result from smoking or the use of chemical cleaners and perfumes, as well as excess dust. Tightly built homes or offices (with insufficient ventilation) can trap **fumes from paint, carpets and other furnishings which may contain formaldehyde** (a carcinogen and respiratory irritant) and other toxic irritants.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: MINIMIZE EXPOSURE. REDUCE RISK.

- **Help reduce outdoor pollution:** Drive less, walk more or use public transportation and carpools so you require less fuel to be burned. Use less electricity so power plants have to burn less as well.
- **Observe air quality alerts** and monitor weather to avoid triggering asthma and allergy attacks.
- **Avoid highly polluted areas,** such as busy streets and highways, whenever possible. When stuck in idling traffic, close windows and outside air vents – choose the “recycled air” vent option instead.
- **Keep indoor air clean:** Don’t smoke. Use natural cleaners. Open the windows to air out the house. Use low or Zero VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) paints.
- **Choose solid wood flooring or washable natural rugs** instead of wall-to-wall or synthetic carpeting.
- **Wash stuffed toys regularly.** Consider washing with bed linens or blankets. Use allergy-free mattress and pillow covers. Avoid purchasing overstuffed furniture and heavy draperies that tend to trap dust.
- **Vacuum often, using a HEPA filtration system** which is properly maintained. Change or clean filters as directed.

