

Respiratory Health during Wildfire Smoke Exposure Self-Management Plan

- Check local air quality reports
- Consult visibility guides
- Keep indoor air as clean as possible

- Avoid activities that increase indoor pollution, e.g. burning candles, use of fireplaces, vacuuming, and tobacco use.

Green Flags – All Clear

What this means ...



If:

- No respiratory problems
- Not exposed to wildfire smoke

- Good work!

Keep up the good work!

Yellow Flags – Caution

What this means ...



If:

- Exposed to wildfire smoke.
- Have Asthma, COPD or chronic lung conditions, diabetes, heart disease.
- Have trouble breathing normally.
- Headaches
- Persistent cough
- Eyes that sting
- A scratchy throat
- Runny nose
- Irritation of sinuses
- Wheezing/shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Lung condition not responding to usual medication/treatment
- Tired/fatigued.
- Fast heartbeat

- You are at higher risk for respiratory complications.
- Take precautions. Stay indoors and avoid going outdoors. Keep windows and doors closed.

Call your primary care provider, consulting nurse, or other health care provider if symptoms do not improve.

Name:

Number:

Instructions:

If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.

Red Flags – Stop and Think

What this means ...



If you have:

- Shortness of breath not improved by treatment(s) or medication(s)
- Respiratory distress

You need to be evaluated by a health care professional immediately.

If possible, notify your health care provider's office.

Name:

Number:

Follow these instructions: **CALL 9-1-1**

If you notice a Red Flag, CALL 911. Emergency!

Fast Facts

- Wildfire smoke is a mixture of gases and fine particles from burning trees and other plant materials. **Ash from fires can also include other debris, including broken glass, exposed wires, and dust from contaminants, including metals and chemicals. Though it may look like fog, it is not fog.**
- Inhaling smoke is not good for your health, even if you are normally a health person. Healthy people can get sick if there is enough smoke in the air.
- Smoke can hurt your eyes, irritate your breathing, and worsen chronic heart and lung diseases. People who have heart or lung diseases, like heart disease, chest pain, lung disease or asthma or at higher risk for heart attack or stroke are at higher risk, too.
- Older adults and children are at higher risk respiratory problems.
- Paper “comfort” or “dust” masks commonly used to trap large particles, such as sawdust do not work for wildfire smoke. These masks will not protect your lungs from smoke.

What can you do?

- Check local air quality reports and listen to news or health warnings in your community. Avoid smoke exposure when outside.
- Avoid exercising outdoors, or if you must be outdoors, limit your outside activity. Avoid running and jogging as these activities increase your air intake and thereby you inhale more pollution.
- When you have been outside, change your clothing when going indoors. Rinse out irritated eyes. Drink water to avoid becoming dehydrated and reduce symptoms of scratchy throat and coughing.
- When indoors, use a high efficiency (HEPA) air cleaner, if possible. Freestanding indoor air filters with particle removal can help people with heart disease, respiratory conditions, e.g. asthma. Keep windows and doors closed.
- Avoid using an indoor fan or swamp cooler that takes air in from the outside.
- Talk with your health care provider about using an “N95” mask, however, note the mask needs to fit properly, and it may be hard for people with respiratory diseases to use.
- If driving in smoky areas, keep your windows and vents closed

Aging and Disability Services

Aging and Disability Services (ADS)—the Area Agency on Aging for King County— plans, coordinates, and advocates for comprehensive services for older adults, family caregivers, and people with disabilities throughout Seattle and King County.

For more information, call 1-844-348-5464 or e-mail info@communitylivingconnections.org



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