

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

AIRNow

[Recent Additions](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Print Version](#) Search:

[EPA Home](#) > [Air & Radiation](#) > [Air Quality Planning & Standards](#) > [AIRNow](#) > [TV Weather](#) > Myths and Facts

Myths and Facts about the AQI, Ozone and Particles for On-Air Use



- Where I Live
- What You Can Do
- Air Quality Forecast
- Ozone Levels
- Publications
- Background
- Air Quality Index
- Health Facts
- Web Cams
- Action Day Programs
- Education Resources



MYTH	FACT
The Air Quality Index only forecasts ozone.	The expanded AQI will also include daily forecasts for particle pollution.
Air quality is only a concern in the summer.	Particle pollution, unlike ozone, occurs year-round.
Asthma is only a concern during the summer and/ or when playing sports.	Asthma is a lung disease, and people with asthma are especially susceptible to air pollution year-round.
Air quality only affects us when we are outside.	That's right for ozone. But when particle levels are high outdoors, they can also be high indoors.
There is nothing I can do about air quality, so I should just ignore it.	People can reduce their exposure to air pollution by simply checking their daily air quality forecast and using it to adjust their strenuous outdoor activities.
Ozone and particle pollution affect the same groups of people.	Sensitive groups for <u>particle pollution</u> include people with heart or lung disease (such as asthma), older adults and children. This differs from the sensitive groups for <u>ozone</u>, which include people with lung disease, children and adults who are active outdoors.

The health effects of ozone and particle pollution are the same.

I need to pay attention only to red and purple Air Quality Index forecasts.

Only long-term exposure to particle pollution causes health problems.

Air quality is a health concern only for people with lung disease (including asthma) and older adults.

The effects of high particle levels in the air can be very serious for people with heart or lung disease and older adults and can occur with even short-term exposure.

Even when the air quality is forecast to be code orange for ozone or particles, people in sensitive groups are at risk.

Health effects for particles have been associated with exposures over a 1- to 24-hour period as well as long-term exposures.

Others can be affected by air pollution, including people with heart disease, active adults and children. And when the air quality forecast is code red -- everyone can be affected.

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