**Communication Materials on Climate Change, Health, and Older Adults**

***Summary Points from the U.S. Climate and Health Assessment***

# Background

In April 2016, the United States Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) released a new assessment report about a growing threat to public health: climate change. Drawing upon decades of research on the physical science of climate change, [*The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment*](https://health2016.globalchange.gov/) presents information on the increased risks that climate change poses to human health.

The U.S. Climate and Health Assessment significantly advances what we know about the impacts of climate change on public health. It also highlights factors that make some individuals and communities especially vulnerable to these threats.

During public forums, scientific conferences, webinars and meetings, as well as in public comments submitted during the development of the U.S. Climate and Health Assessment, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) received multiple requests for summary materials that would help communicate the message that certain populations are disproportionately vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change. In response to these requests, EPA has summarized information from the U.S. Climate and Health Assessment focusing on impacts of climate change on the health on **eight populations of concern**:

* Communities with environmental justice concerns
* Indigenous peoples
* Pregnant women
* Children
* Older Adults
* Occupational groups
* People with pre-existing health conditions
* People with disabilities

For each of these groups, EPA has compiled a suite of communication materials for use by stakeholders who are looking for concise, accurate language to aid conversations with their constituent groups on climate and health impacts. Communication materials specific to each of the populations listed above, as well as general summary messages on climate change, health, and populations of concern, can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-change-health-and-populations-concern>.

# How to Use These Materials

Public health workers, local and state government officials, educators, advocacy organizations, and community leaders have a critical voice in communicating important health information to the people who need it the most.

In response to request from stakeholders, EPA has prepared materials to help communicate key messages on the impacts of climate change on human health. The information in these materials is tailored for anyone interested in **environmental health risks to older adults**.

These communication materials, derived from the U.S. Climate and Health Assessment, include:

* A factsheet, in English, Spanish, and large font size, available online and as a printable PDF
* A customizable PowerPoint presentation
* High-Resolution images
* An introductory paragraph on vulnerable populations
* Key points about risks to older adults
* Shorter messages about risks to older adults

Because the availability of good information leads to better public health and environmental protection, these materials are designed to be used or modified to inform conversations about climate change and health impacts to vulnerable populations. For questions or assistance, please email [climatehealth@epa.gov](mailto:climatehealth@epa.gov).

# Electronic and Print Resources

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|  | **A Factsheet** onClimate Change, Health, and Older Adults (four pages) is available in web and print formats, in English, Spanish, and large font size. | [https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/communicating-vulnerabilities-climate-change-older-adults](https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/communicating-vulnerabilities-climate-change-older-adults%20) |
|  | A **customizable PowerPoint template** with talking points can be used at conferences and meetings as a standalone presentation or added to existing slides. |
| \\betfile01\DATA1\Common\ERD\COOLIT-CLIMECON4_EPA-CCD\Task Orders\COOLIT 010 Support for Climate Communication Products - Health\task 5\fact sheet outreach\social media graphics\Elderly_Thumbnail.jpg | **High Resolution Images** can be compelling when paired with other outreach materials. Images are sized for various uses and platforms. |
|  | A **clickable map** with examples of state-by-state health impacts and resources to prepare and respond to climate threats | <https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-change-and-human-health-risks-your-state> |
| A **ten-question interactive online quiz-** challenge your friends on social media! | <https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/quiz-how-much-do-you-know-about-health-impacts-climate-change> |
| **Climate Change Impacts Website** | <https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts> |
| **cover.jpg** | **U.S. Climate and Health Assessment Chapter 9: Populations of concern** | <https://health2016.globalchange.gov/populations-concern> |

**Summary text**

*The language below can be used or modified for different formats or mediums, to communicate how climate change threatens the health of older adults.*

**Introductory Paragraph**

Older adults are especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to a number of reasons such as normal changes in the body associated with aging that can limit mobility and the greater likelihood to have a chronic health condition that requires medications for treatment. The United States Global Change Research Program’s (USGCRP) new report, [*The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment*](https://health2016.globalchange.gov/),presents information on the factors that make older adults more sensitive to environmental hazards related to climate change. More information about these impacts and disparities, as well as outreach and communication materials including a factsheet (in English, Spanish, and large font), summary key points, a customizable PowerPoint presentation, and high-resolution images, can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/communicating-vulnerabilities-climate-change-older-adults>.

**Key Points**

* Climate change affects the food we eat, the air we breathe, and the water we drink. It also leads to extreme weather events, like flooding, droughts, and wildfires. All of these impacts have an effect on human health.
* The United States Global Change Research Program’s (USGCRP) new report, [*The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment*](https://health2016.globalchange.gov/), presents information on the increased risks that climate change poses to human health and welfare and highlights factors that make some individuals and communities especially vulnerable.
* Older adults are vulnerable to climate change-related health impacts for a number of reasons including: normal changes in the body associated with aging that limit their mobility, chronic health condition that require medications for treatment, and their need for assistance with daily activities. A new fact sheet from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Climate Change and the Health of Older Adults* presents information on the factors that make older adults more sensitive to environmental hazards related to climate change.
* Older adults are particularly sensitive to certain environmental exposures affected by climate change, like:
  + Poor air quality
  + Extreme heat
  + Extreme weather events
  + Illnesses spread by ticks and mosquitoes
  + Exposure to contaminated water
* Understanding the threats that climate change poses to human health can help us work together to lower risks and be prepared. It is important for older adults, their families, and caregivers to understand the impact of climate change on their health so they can begin planning to protect themselves.

**Shorter Messages**

* Older adults are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. To learn more, visit: [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)
* Power outages from extreme weather events can make it difficult for older adults to use their medical equipment. [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)
* Poor air quality due to climate change increases the number of ER visits for even healthy older adults. [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)
* Climate change is making mosquito season longer & increasing the risk for older adults to be bitten by disease-carrying insects. [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)
* New EPA fact sheets detail the health impacts of climate change on older adults. [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)

**Shorter Messages (Spanish)**

* Los adultos mayores son particularmente vulnerables a los impactos del cambio climático. Para saber más, visite: [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)
* Los apagones debidos a eventos climáticos extremos pueden crear dificultades para que los adultos mayores usen su equipo médico. [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)
* La mala calidad del aire debida al cambio climático aumenta el número de visitas a la sala de urgencias, hasta para los adultos mayores sanos. [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)
* El cambio climático está prolongando la temporada de mosquitos y aumentando el riesgo para los adultos mayores de que los piquen insectos portadores de enfermedades. [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)
* Una nueva hoja informativa de EPA presenta los impactos del cambio climático en la salud de los adultos mayores. [go.usa.gov/xkspm](http://go.usa.gov/xkspm)