Have Heart Disease?
Steps You Can Take to Reduce Health Effects from Air Pollution

Studies show that air pollution can trigger heart attacks, strokes and worsen heart failure in people who are at risk for these conditions. If you have a heart condition, you could benefit by reducing your exposure to high levels of air pollution.

**Air Pollution Levels can be high**
- Any time of year
- When weather is calm
- Near busy roads
- In urban areas
- In industrial areas
- When there is smoke

**Are you at risk?**
Greater risk if you have or have had:
- Coronary artery disease
- Angina (chest pain)
- A heart attack
- Bypass surgery or an angioplasty
- Heart failure
- An internal cardiac defibrillator
- A stroke or transient ischemic attack
- Blockages in the arteries of the neck or legs

**Check the AQI Daily**
Check current pollution forecasts and reports that use the Air Quality Index (AQI)
- On local TV, radio or newspapers
- On the Internet at [airnow.gov](http://airnow.gov)
- Through the AirNow app for iPhone and Android phones
- Through free e-mail alerts at [enviroflash.info](http://enviroflash.info)

The AQI is a simple color scale that tells you how clean or polluted the air is and provides an advisory health message.
**Steps to Protect Your Heart**

When pollution is high, you can reduce the amount of particle pollution you inhale

- Delay your outdoor activity until the air is cleaner
- Reduce your activity level (for example, go for a walk instead of a jog)
- Move your exercise inside
- Avoid exercising near busy roads

To learn more, visit: [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov)

**Reduce Your Risk**

Reduce your overall risk of heart disease and stroke

- Eat healthy foods
- Control blood pressure
- Control cholesterol levels
- Exercise more (first check with your health care provider)
- Stop smoking
- Take aspirin and heart medication as directed
- Talk to your health care provider about treatment

**Warning Signs of a Heart Attack**

- Chest discomfort (uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing, or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back)
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body (pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach)
- Shortness of breath
- Other signs may include breaking out in cold sweats, nausea, or light-headedness

**Warning Signs of a Stroke**

- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg (especially on one side of the body)
- Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Problems seeing
- Dizziness, loss of balance or coordination, or trouble walking
- Severe headache with no known cause

For more information, visit

- [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)
- [www.millionhearts.hhs.gov](http://www.millionhearts.hhs.gov)
- [epa.gov/research/airscience/air-cardiovascular.htm](http://epa.gov/research/airscience/air-cardiovascular.htm)

Learn more about preventing heart attacks and stroke at:

- [www.cdc.gov/heartdisease](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease)
- [www.cdc.gov/stroke](http://www.cdc.gov/stroke)