

SAFETY TIPS: SMOKE PRECAUTIONS



Who is most at risk from exposure to smoke?

Young children, the elderly, and people with heart or lung conditions, like asthma, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and congestive heart failure are more sensitive to the adverse effects of exposure to smoke. Risks increase when smoke becomes heavier and as the length of time a person is exposed increases.

What are the symptoms of smoke exposure?

Exposure to smoke can cause sore eyes, tears, cough and a runny nose. If the smoke lasts days to weeks or is very heavy, it can cause lung problems and a longer-lasting cough. Exposure to smoke can also make heart and lung conditions worse.

What should I do if I'm concerned about smoke?

You can take the following precautions:

- Limit outdoor activities, especially if it makes you tired or short of breath.
- Stay inside and keep windows and doors closed. If you have an air conditioner set it to “re-circulate” and keep it running to help filter the air and keep you cool. If you do not have air conditioning, if possible, try spending some time in an air conditioned place (such as a mall or library) to cool off.
- Keep a close watch on at risk individuals, particularly those that live alone. Young children, elderly people and individuals with chronic conditions may be more sensitive to heat or smoke.
- If you are in your car or truck, keep the windows closed and put the air system on “re-circulate.”
- Limit any strenuous indoor activities if you have been exposed to smoke.
- Avoid cigarette smoke.
- If you have room air cleaners with HEPA filters turn them on.
- Don't burn anything, including wood stoves, gas stoves and even candles.
- Check local weather forecasts for information on fire conditions in your area.

For more information visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/wildfires>