

Air Quality and Physical Activity:

What You Need to Know

Poor air quality can harm your health. When you're physically active you breathe in more air. That's why it's important to reduce the amount of air pollution you breathe in when you're physically active.

Who's most affected by **poor** air quality?

- ▶ People who have:
 - Asthma
 - Heart disease
 - COPD (a long-term lung disease)



How can I protect myself from air pollution during **physical activity**?

When air quality is poor, adjust your physical activity routine to avoid breathing in too much air pollution:



Move your physical activities indoors



Change your physical activity to something less intense (for example, walking instead of jogging)



Shorten the amount of time that you're physically active

If you have asthma, be sure you keep your inhaler with you at all times — especially when you're outside.

How do I get information about air quality where I live?

Each day, you can find out what the air quality is like by checking the Air Quality Index (AQI) for where you live. The AQI tells you when high levels of air pollution are predicted for the day. You can use that information to plan for safe and healthy physical activity.



* Sensitive groups include people who have asthma, heart disease, or COPD.

Checking the AQI is easy — **anyone can do it!**

- [Look up the AQI online](#)
- [Sign up to get email or text AQI alerts](#)



Centers for Disease and Prevention
National Center for Environmental Health