



Tips for Children

As Southern Californians battle the wildfires, there are measures we all can take to protect our health from the harmful pollutants filling our air.

Children are more sensitive to air pollution for several reasons. First their respiratory systems are still developing. Children also breathe more air per pound of bodyweight than adults. Lastly, they are more active outdoors, thus increasing their exposure to outdoor pollutants.

Here are some tips you can follow to protect children's health from unhealthy air:

- **Stay indoors.** Limit their exposure to unhealthy air quality conditions as much as possible. Keep your windows and doors closed. Use your air conditioning system and place it on recirculation mode, if available.
- **Play indoors.** Choose indoor options for children, who live and play in areas that have unhealthy pollution levels.
- **Reduce outdoor activity.** Reducing outdoor physical activity lowers the amount of polluted air your body intakes. Schools and day care centers should curtail outdoor activities and events that involve prolonged exposure and strenuous exercise or sports participation.
- **Consult their physician.** If your child suffers from a heart or lung ailment, talk with a doctor. Call the doctor immediately if your child's condition worsens.
- **Have a plan.** Keep an adequate supply of your child's medications (5 days or more) on hand. If your child suffers from asthma have a written asthma management plan available.
- **Stay alert.** Listen to your local news, weather forecasts and air quality alerts provided by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD). If the air quality in your area worsens take necessary precautions to protect your child's health.

While the ash and smoke are visible reminders of the pollution currently impacting our area, be even more cautious of the fine particles you can't see. These particles, which are invisible to the naked eye, bypass our natural defense system and lodge into our lungs. They can cause irritation, and over the long-term cause decreased lung function. They also make us more susceptible to developing diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, emphysema and possibly cancer.

If you have any questions about air quality, please call AQMD at **1-800-CUT-SMOG** or visit our website at www.aqmd.gov.