

October 3, 2023

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN PALM BEACH COUNTY REMIND FLORIDIANS OF WILDFIRE SMOKE HEALTH RISKS



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Palm Beach County, FL— The Air Quality Index reached 111 as of 12:00pm Oct. 3rd. 2023, which is in the “unhealthy to sensitive groups” range. This is mostly due to smoke from wildfires burning in Canada. The Florida Department of Health in Palm Beach County is advising people sensitive to smoke especially those with respiratory and heart issues to limit their outdoor activities.

Smoke is a respiratory irritant, and can cause scratchy throat, irritated eyes, nose and worsen conditions such as asthma and other chronic respiratory or lung conditions. Avoid prolonged outdoor activities. Stay indoors and run your air conditioner if you have one. Keep the fresh air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent bringing additional smoke inside. For best results, run the air conditioning with re-circulated air.

Note: If you don't have an air conditioner, staying inside with the windows closed may be dangerous in extremely hot weather. In these cases, seek alternative shelter.

Keep particle levels inside lower. When smoke levels are high, try to avoid using anything that burns, such as wood fireplaces, gas logs, gas stoves, and even candles. Do not vacuum as that can stir up particles already inside your home. Also refrain from smoking tobacco.

Follow your doctor's advice about taking your medicines and following your asthma management plan if you have respiratory or heart disease. Call your doctor if your symptoms worsen.

Air Quality Index can be found at www.Airnow.gov

- **"Good"** AQI is 0 - 50. Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
- **"Moderate"** AQI is 51 - 100. Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people. For example, people who are unusually sensitive to ozone may experience respiratory symptoms.
- **"Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups"** AQI is 101 - 150. Although general public is not likely to be affected at this AQI range, people with lung disease, older adults and children are at a greater risk from exposure to ozone, whereas persons with heart and lung disease, older adults and children are at greater risk from the presence of particles in the air. .
- **"Unhealthy"** AQI is 151 - 200. Everyone may begin to experience some adverse health effects, and members of the sensitive groups may experience more serious effects. .

- **"Very Unhealthy"** AQI is 201 - 300. This would trigger a health alert signifying that everyone may experience more serious health effects.
- **"Hazardous"** AQI greater than 300. This would trigger a health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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