

Wildfire smoke and your baby

Reducing exposure during and after pregnancy



Why is it important for my baby's health to reduce our wildfire smoke exposure?

Wildfire smoke may be more harmful to children and pregnant people, who are sensitive populations.



If you are pregnant and not breathing well because of the smoke, your baby is not either.



Exposure to wildfire smoke during pregnancy may increase the risk that your baby is born early or small.



Babies are especially at risk for health effects from exposure to wildfire smoke, mostly because their lungs are still growing.

How can I learn more about wildfire smoke and air quality in my area?

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a tool that tells you how clean or polluted your outdoor air is.



HOW DO I KNOW IF THE AIR IS BAD TO BREATHE?

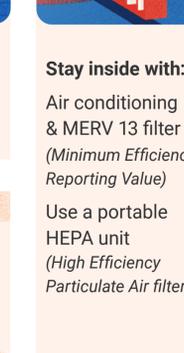
As the numbers on the AQI go up during a wildfire event, there is more chance of having health effects associated with breathing in the smoke.



Do not spend unnecessary time outside if the AQI is in the unhealthy ranges ("Orange" level or higher).

HOW DO I LOOK UP THE AQI?

You can look up the AQI using your zip code at airnow.gov



How can I reduce wildfire smoke exposure for myself and my baby?



Go somewhere without smoke



Go inside and shut windows



Stay inside with:

Air conditioning & MERV 13 filter (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value)

Use a portable HEPA unit (High Efficiency Particulate Air filter)



When there is smoke outside, the best place to be is inside with good air quality. Learn more about [indoor air quality](#).

How can I reduce wildfire smoke exposure for myself and my baby?

Please limit your time outside during smoke events.



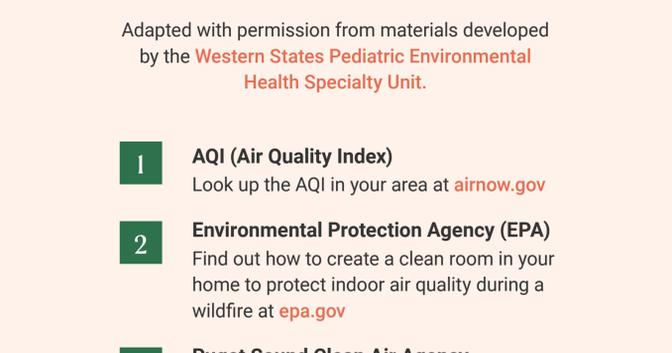
Close windows, use air conditioning and recirculate the air in your car.

If you must go outside, a properly fitting N95 mask will provide some protection.



Cloth face coverings (like those for COVID) DO NOT reliably filter out small smoke particles.

[Learn more about masks to protect pregnant people from wildfire smoke](#)



How can I create a "Clean Room" in my home?

Indoor air can also have high levels of pollutants. Follow these simple steps to make an indoor air cleaner for yourself and your baby.

Choose a room big enough to fit everyone in your household.

Run fans or air conditioners. Turn off or close fresh air intake on air conditioners.

Close windows and doors in the room.

Filter the air in the room using a portable air cleaner.

Minimize creation of indoor air pollution.

Learn more about creating a clean room to protect indoor air quality during a wildfire at epa.gov

How can I make my own air cleaner at home?

Watch this [video](#) on making your own filter fan with a box fan furnace filter. A filter fan can filter out the small particles common in wildfire smoke.

For more on building a filter fan yourself, watch this [video tutorial](#).

References and other resources

Adapted with permission from materials developed by the [Western States Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit](#).

1 AQI (Air Quality Index)
Look up the AQI in your area at airnow.gov

2 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Find out how to create a clean room in your home to protect indoor air quality during a wildfire at epa.gov

3 Puget Sound Clean Air Agency
Learn to make a do-it-yourself air filter at pscleanair.gov

4 Western States Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (WS PEHSU)
For more information on wildfires and reducing exposure for pregnant individuals and children visit wspehsu.ucsf.edu

