What is wildfire smoke?

Wildfire smoke can travel thousands of miles and includes a mix of air pollutants like very small particles (PM_{2.5}) and gases like carbon dioxide (CO_{2}) and ozone (O_{3}).

We breathe these small air pollutants into our lungs. From there, they can enter our blood and harm other organs like the heart and brain.

How does wildfire smoke harm our health?

Air pollution from wildfires and other sources increases risk for:

- Heart attack and high blood pressure
- Asthma flares and lung infection
- Stroke and depression
- Pre-term births and low birth weight
- Eczema and itchy skin
- Allergies and runny nose
- Dry and itchy eyes

How can we stay safe?

- Stay indoors, use an air purifier with a HEPA filter, and limit outdoor exercise.
- Reduce activities like smoking, vaping, vacuuming, or using gas stoves when indoors.
- When outdoors, wear a tight-fitting N95 mask or a surgical mask for children ages 2-7.
- Check the Air Quality Index (AQI) at www.AirNow.gov before going outside.

Ask a medical provider about your personal health risks, and learn more by opening the camera on your phone and scanning the following QR code:

Project supported by Health Care Without Harm’s Emerging Physician Leader Award grant.