



Reducing the Lung Health Burden of the Climate Crisis

A Public Health Intervention in Phoenix, Arizona

The American Lung Association, in collaboration with CVS Health Foundation, is working with healthcare providers, partnering organizations and individuals to support people with lung disease who are facing health complications due to climate change. The goals of this project are to:

1. Equip healthcare providers with tools to improve care of patients with lung disease during poor air quality days.
2. Empower people with lung disease to take steps that reduce their risk of health complications during days with unhealthy air.
3. Utilize local air quality data to develop education programs and promote policies to protect lung health.

Key elements of this project include climate and lung health education for people with lung disease and their caregivers and the distribution of air quality sensors. This intervention is being implemented in Phoenix, Arizona (Maricopa County), as it is one of most polluted cities in the United States for ozone and particulate pollution.

State of the Air 2024

- Compared to other metropolitan areas, the Phoenix area ranked 5 worst for high ozone days, 16 worst for 24-hour particle pollution and 7 worst for annual particle pollution.
- Maricopa County received a failing grade for high ozone days, 24-hour particle pollution and annual particle pollution, meaning these levels exceeded Environmental Protection Agency standards.

Populations at Risk in Maricopa County

- Total Population: 4,551,524
- Pediatric Asthma: 82,166
- Adult Asthma: 348,328
- COPD: 224,399
- Lung Cancer: 1,654

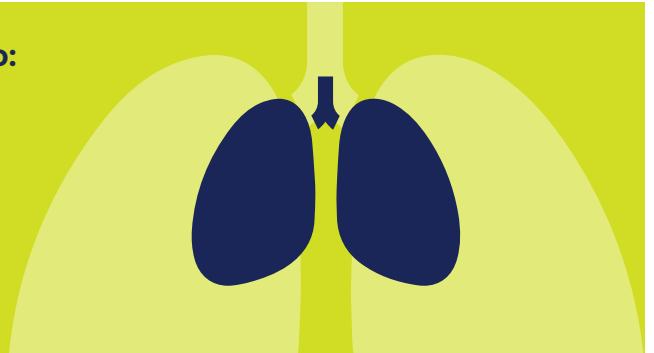
Air Quality and Lung Health

Health Impacts and Communities at Risk

Climate change is worsening air quality issues, as record heatwaves, droughts and wildfires become commonplace. Exposure to unhealthy air causes complications for the 34 million people in the U.S. who are living with lung disease and puts millions more at risk of developing chronic illness.

Exposure to unhealthy air can cause or contribute to:

- Wheezing and coughing
- Shortness of breath
- Asthma attacks
- Worsening COPD
- Lung cancer



Some people are more at risk of illness and death from air pollution than others. Risk factors like exposure, physical susceptibility, healthcare access and psychosocial stress often interact in ways that lead to significant health inequities among subgroups of the population including:

- People of color
- People experiencing poverty
- Children
- Older adults
- People with chronic lung disease
- People with a smoking history

This project aims to decrease the negative impact that poor air quality has on people with lung disease and address the associated health disparities faced by marginalized communities.

Learn more about Reducing the Lung Health Burden of the Climate Crisis:

Lung.org/AZ-climate

