



HEALTHY HEARTS NEED CLEAN AIR



Heart disease is the number one killer of women. And air pollution makes it worse.



- Almost 300,000 women die each year from heart disease -- more women by far than all forms of cancer, combined. These women are all of us: mothers, daughters, sisters, and aunts.
- Each minute, one woman dies from heart disease.
- Because our hearts and lungs are so closely related, breathing polluted air harms our hearts, and contributes to the too-high death toll from heart disease.
- Breathing dirty air increases the risk of death from cardiovascular problems, which include heart attack and stroke.
- Dirty air harms our hearts by raising blood pressure and triggering inflammation.
- Within hours of a pollution spike, exposure to air pollution increases hospitalization rates and death from cardiovascular disease. Short term increases in fine particle pollution lead to the death of tens of thousands of people every year in the US.
- Longer-term exposure to fine particles (over the course of years instead of days) can shave months to years off of life expectancy. Air pollution increases the risk of death from cardiovascular disease even at levels below current federal and international standards. In matters of the heart, there is no safe level of particle pollution.
- Air pollution is a minor risk factor for cardiovascular disease (CVD), compared to diet and physical activity. But because so many people die of CVD, even small risks have a big impact. In the US, outdoor air pollution is responsible for 200,000 deaths each year, of which tens of thousands are due to cardiovascular problems.
- Two forms of air pollution have been linked with heart problems: fine particle pollution, or PM 2.5, and ground level ozone, or smog.
- Both particle pollution and unhealthy ozone levels are predicted to increase with climate change, especially in cities. Because of this, climate change may increase the risk of death from cardiovascular disease.
- Increased temperatures from climate change will harm hearts in another way, too: high heat contributes directly to cardiovascular deaths, especially in the elderly.
- Help protect your heart and the hearts of your loved ones by avoiding exposure to high levels of air pollution. Learn about the real-time air quality in your community.
- Be an engaged citizen. Let's use the power of mother love to protect our hearts. Join us in telling our politicians that we are deeply concerned about air pollution, climate change, and cardiovascular health, and they should be too.

For more information and sources, see momscleanairforce.org/heart