

Outdoor Air Quality and Heart Disease

Poor air quality is unhealthy for everyone, but especially **people with heart disease** — such as **heart failure** or **coronary artery disease**. The recommendations below relate to **where and when** you exercise. Follow recommendations related to your specific health condition for **how much** you exercise. For people with heart disease, poor air quality can cause:

NOW				LATER
Shortness of breath	Chest pain	Heart attack	More hospital and emergency visits	Greater risk of heart attack, stroke, blood clots, and early death

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a number for reporting how clean or unhealthy your air is every day.

You can find it on the Internet at AirNow.gov. It's also reported in local news sources:



When AQI is: A person with heart disease should:

<p>1–50 GOOD</p>	<p>Enjoy usual outdoor activities</p>	<p>Always take your medications as prescribed by your doctor, especially when air quality is unhealthy</p>
<p>51–100 MODERATE</p>	<p>Take it easy outdoors</p>	
<p>101–150 UNHEALTHY for sensitive groups</p>	<p>Plan necessary outdoor activities at times of day when air quality is better (usually morning)</p>	
<p>151–200 UNHEALTHY</p>	<p>Avoid outdoor air in places with a lot of traffic</p>	
<p>201–300 VERY UNHEALTHY</p>	<p>Exercise indoors</p>	
		<p>If you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pain or tightness in the chest, arms, neck, back or jaw • palpitations • shortness of breath • unusual tiredness <p>Call your doctor and don't exercise</p>

What causes poor air quality?



Smoke stacks



Wood burning — inside or outside



Cars and trucks

Blowing dust

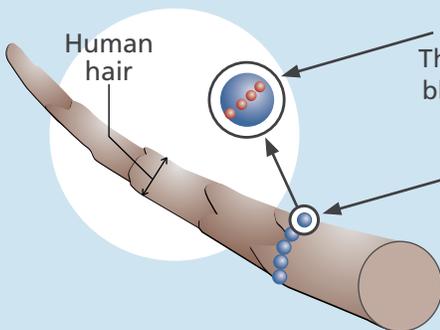
If you have heart disease, particulate matter is the biggest risk.

Particulate matter is tiny particles in the air like dust, dirt, soot, and smoke. In northern Utah, it's more common and more problematic in winter months. Symptoms may come several hours after exposure.

Carbon monoxide is a gas that comes from the exhaust of cars and trucks. It reduces the amount of oxygen that can get to your heart and other organs. Carbon monoxide is usually worse in cold weather.

Particulate matter and your heart

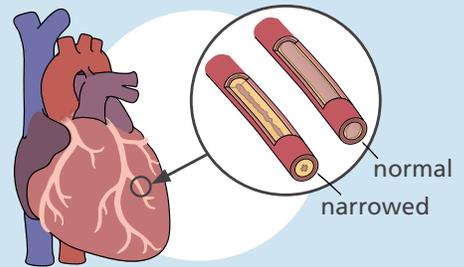
Particulate matter is sometimes reported as PM 2.5 or PM 10



Human hair

PM 2.5 particles are extremely tiny. They can get into your blood and cause blood vessels to narrow. This can cause serious health problems.

PM 10 particles are a bit bigger. They include things like dust, pollen, and mold. Your nose and airways can filter some of these before they reach your heart or lungs.



Narrowed blood vessels

normal narrowed

More ways to take action



Pay attention to the air in your home

Be sure indoor air is free of smoke and chemical fumes. Ask your doctor if you should get an air filter.



Listen to your body

Get to know your own responses at different AQI levels — and when you need to change your plans.



Get to know your neighborhood

Pay attention to places and times of day where air quality affects you most.



Learn more

Get more information about how you can help improve air quality — both outdoors and in your home.

Utah Clean Air
UCAIR.org
AirNow.gov
EPA.gov/
airquality