

Outdoor Air Quality

For children who have been treated for cancer

Poor air quality can be especially bad for children who were treated with certain types of chemotherapy. Some chemotherapy drugs can have damaging effects on the lungs. Protecting your child from poor air quality and air pollution can help them have better long-term health and quality of life.

Too much time in polluted air:



Damages lungs and weakens the immune system
Reduces lung function and worsens symptoms, like coughing and difficulty breathing, in children with asthma, cystic fibrosis, pneumonia, and bronchitis



Increases risk of death from lung infections, even years after cancer treatment ends

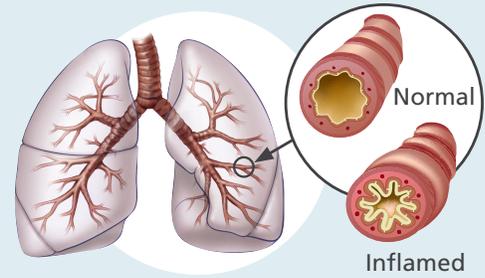
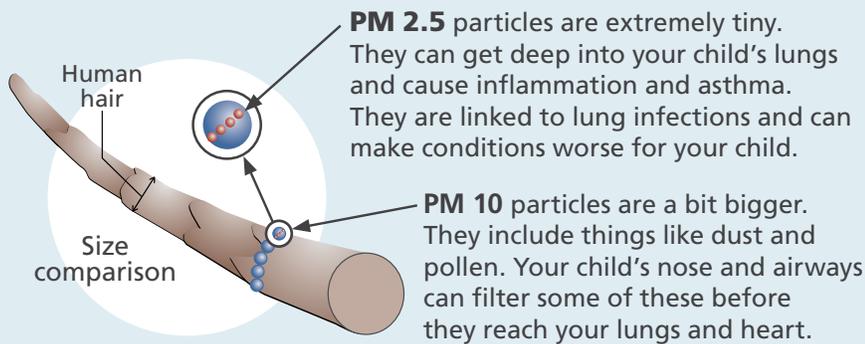
Take action. Help your child avoid air pollution.

Pay attention to your child's symptoms when outdoors. Look for coughing, wheezing, and watery eyes. Know when to bring your child indoors. Help them play inside when air quality is at unhealthy levels. Be aware of the Air Quality Index (AQI), a number that shows how clean or unhealthy the air is every day. You can find the AQI online at AirNow.gov. It's also reported in local news.

When AQI is:	A child who has been treated for cancer should:		
1–50 GOOD	 Enjoy usual outdoor activities		 Traffic pollution is harmful even when AQI is good Whenever possible, avoid outdoor air in places with a lot of traffic
51–100 MODERATE	 Limit time outdoors	 Look to play indoors	
101–150 UNHEALTHY for sensitive groups	 Play and exercise indoors Stay inside for school recess or workouts	 Plan outdoor activities in the morning, when air quality is usually better	
151–200 UNHEALTHY for all			
201–300 VERY UNHEALTHY for all			

Particulate matter in your child's lungs

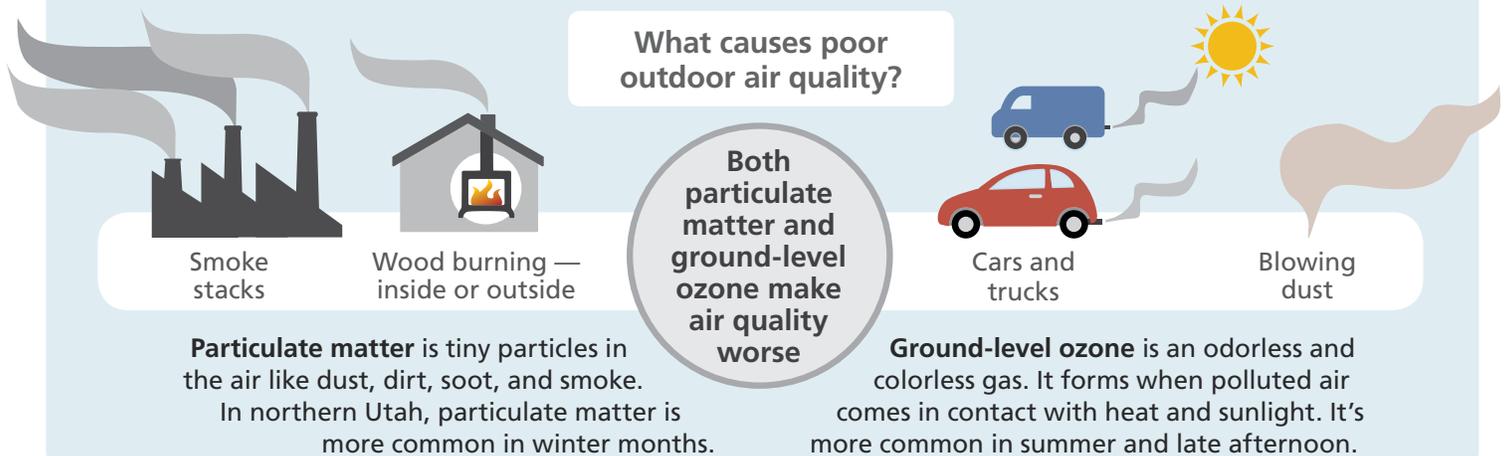
Particulate matter, also known as particle pollution, is a mixture of extremely small solid particles and liquid droplets in the air. It is sometimes reported as PM 2.5 or PM 10.



Inflammation in your child's lungs narrows their airways and makes breathing difficult

A recent Utah study looked at the impact of PM 2.5 particles among childhood cancer survivors. It found them at a much higher risk than other children for needing to go to the hospital for breathing problems and lung infections.

Utah has a lot of air pollution that is linked to breathing and lung problems. Winter inversions in Utah expose people to 6 times the amount of pollution considered unsafe by national health standards.



Parents and caregivers



Ask your child's doctor to add air quality to your child's Survivorship Care Plan.

Let teachers and coaches know that your child needs to play and exercise inside when air quality is unhealthy (above an AQI of 101).

For more information go to: [IntermountainHealthcare.org/clean-air](https://www.intermountainhealthcare.org/clean-air)

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