



Teller County Public Health & Environment

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Health Recommendations for Wildfire Smoke

The smoke from wildfires can cause health problems for many people. The particles in the smoke from wildfires can be irritating to your throat, eyes and lungs.

Who is most likely to be affected by:

- Elderly.
- Young children.
- Pregnancy.
- People with pre-existing lung or heart/circulatory conditions (asthma, emphysema, COPD, allergies, heart disease, etc.).
- People with respiratory infections such as the common cold, influenza and COVID-19.
- People with smoke allergies; not common and should be managed by your provider.
- ***Inhaling smoke is not safe for anyone, even if you are healthy and have no pre-existing medical conditions.***

Symptoms of Wildfire Smoke Exposure:

- Eye, nose, throat irritation; runny eyes and/or nose.
- Sore throat.
- Coughing.
- Trouble breathing or chest tightness- this could be symptoms of a more serious medical condition; please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department immediately.
- Onset of asthma or emphysema symptoms.
- There is an increase in the chances of getting sick with a cold or having an immune response within days or weeks of exposure to smoke.
- If your symptoms persist and/or are severe you need to seek medical attention. Contact your primary care provider.

Tips for you and your family to help minimize your exposure:

- Stay indoors; Close windows and doors but not so tight that there is no circulation also, it could get dangerously hot inside if you do not have the means to cool your home with a filtered air conditioner.
- Seek locations that have filtered air for temporary relief.
- Use HEPA room air filters if you have them.
- Avoid exercising and limit activities outdoors when the smoke is heavy.
- Be sure that you are getting enough sleep, eating a healthy well-balanced diet and mitigating stress.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Keep your bedroom windows closed at night, smoke tends to be worse at dawn.
- Air out your home when the smoke is not thick/heavy.
- Cloth and surgical masks ***will not*** protect you from wildfire smoke.
- ***N95 masks can protect you from wildfire smoke.***

Be on the lookout for information for N95 mask distribution location(s).