

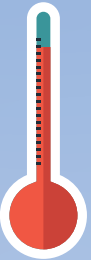
Climate change and your lungs

Climate change is the long-term change to global temperature and weather systems. It has been sped up by human behaviour. We burn fossil fuels such as coal, gas and oil, which produce carbon dioxide and other pollutants or greenhouse gases. These build up in our atmosphere and cause global warming, which can affect your lungs.

Climate change can:

- increase the risk of developing a lung condition, or
- make pre-existing conditions worse.

Extreme heat



Extreme heat can make symptoms of lung disease worse and happen more often. High temperatures increase risks of drought and desert dust storms. This worsens air quality as dust from the ground rises up into the air we breathe. Wildfires become more common, and the smoke pollutes the air we breathe.

Air pollution

Air pollution and climate change are closely linked and are driven by the same sources, including traffic, industry and agriculture. Air pollution contributes to climate change and climate change increases the risks of air pollution.




Plant pollen

Higher temperatures and more carbon dioxide mean plants produce more pollen for longer periods in more places. The pollen is also richer in the chemical that causes allergies. The spread of plants can also change with a changing climate.



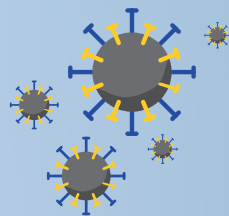
Flooding



Flooding can lead to damp, which increases the risk of mould growth. Mould triggers allergies, causes lung infections and can worsen lung conditions such as asthma and rhinitis.

Infectious diseases

Climate change can affect how well germs that cause diseases spread, reproduce and survive. We will likely see a wider spread of existing viruses and more new viruses spreading into people. There is likely to be a greater risk of epidemics and pandemics due to climate change.



What can you do?

Climate change is a big problem and sometimes it can feel like there is nothing that you can do. Here are some things you can do to look after yourself and the planet.

Campaign for green spaces!

Urban green spaces can improve both physical and mental wellbeing, they help to remove carbon from the atmosphere and have cooling benefits! Campaign to your local authorities to improve access to green spaces in your area.

#TakeTheActiveOption

By walking, cycling or running instead of taking the car are you are reducing your contribution to pollution and making your lungs stronger and healthier!

Eat green

Eat a healthy, balanced diet. More fruits, vegetables and pulses, less meat, and fewer heavily processed foods, can help us to limit the impact we have on the planet and keep us healthy too!

Be a green patient!

- Your health should always come first. But there are ways to limit the impact you might have.
- Take your medications as prescribed - a well-controlled condition can limit the need for additional medications
- Find out where you can recycle used inhalers or empty pill packets
- Campaign for greener medicine production

#BeSmokeFree

We all know that smoking harms our health, but the industry is also a large contributor to climate change and plastic pollution.

This document was produced with the aim of teaching the public about maintaining healthy lungs in light of climate change, ways to fight against climate change and to help healthcare professionals explain the benefits of healthy lungs. It was produced by the European Lung Foundation (ELF) as part of the Healthy Lungs for Life campaign, with the support of Dr Ana Maria Vicedo, Prof. Barbara Hoffmann, Prof. Zorana Jovanovic Andersen and Kjeld Hansen.



HEALTHY LUNGS FOR LIFE

