

Orange Air Quality Days

When the Air Quality Index (AQI) is orange (101-150), the air is unhealthy for sensitive groups, including people with lung disease. One way your lungs can be sensitive to air pollution is if you live with a disease like asthma or COPD. This means you must take more precautions, and sooner than other people, to keep your lungs healthy.



In many parts of the U.S., poor air quality days - including orange, red and even purple and maroon days - are becoming more common. Orange days do not always trigger alerts because the air is not considered unhealthy for the general public, but if you are part of sensitive groups, you need to know when your air is unhealthy and how to respond.

Who is included in sensitive groups?

- People with lung disease
- People with heart disease
- People who are pregnant
- People with diabetes
- Children
- Older adults

Exposure to unhealthy air can cause:

- Wheezing and coughing
- Shortness of breath
- Asthma attacks
- Worsening COPD

How do I check my air quality?

Daily AQI is available at [AirNow.gov](https://airnow.gov). You can also sign up for air quality alerts by visiting [EnviroFlash.info](https://enviroflash.info).

How can I protect my lungs when air quality is poor?

- Limit your time outdoors. Move physical activity indoors and, if you work outdoors, take additional steps such as wearing a respirator.
- If the AQI is orange because of particulate matter from wildfires, you may need to take additional precautions. Visit [Lung.org/wildfires](https://lung.org/wildfires) to learn more about protecting your lungs during wildfires.
- Monitor your lung disease symptoms and consult your asthma or COPD Action Plan to determine next steps. If you have symptoms in the Yellow Zone that do not resolve quickly, follow your plan and call your healthcare provider for guidance if needed.

Download an Action Plan at [Lung.org/COPD-action-plan](https://lung.org/COPD-action-plan) or [Lung.org/asthma-plan](https://lung.org/asthma-plan).

Call the Lung HelpLine at 1-800-LUNGUSA to get free information and support from lung health experts. Learn more at [Lung.org](https://lung.org).