

# Tips for advising patients living in highly polluted settings

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(HealthDay)—Clinicians advising families living overseas in highly

polluted settings should understand their patients' concerns and have a network of resources to draw upon for guidance, according to an article published in the Aug. 1 issue of the *Annals of the American Thoracic Society*.

Wayne F. Quillin, M.D., from the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., addressed the challenging questions raised by complex environments where [patients](#) live, focusing on Americans posted in overseas settings with very high ambient levels of air pollution.

The author notes that clinicians may have patients who are worried about symptoms that might be related to [air pollution](#) and/or concerned about the potential long-term risks. Specific tips about communication with patients include taking the time to listen; patients often present with anxieties and knowledge deficits rather than reports of respiratory symptoms, and these need to be addressed. Clinicians should create a network of resources to draw upon. Patients demanding a high level of expertise may be referred to an outside expert or center of excellence. Clinicians should explain that correlations reported are often not causal; reviewing study reports with patients can be helpful.

"Though we may not feel like experts, we are in a far better position than our patients to understand what they are up against in terms of [pollution exposure](#) and its potential risks to their health," Quillin writes.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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