

Physician warns of health concerns with wildfire smoke

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Canadian and California wildfires are generating a lot of smoke, which is causing air quality issues in some places.

Dr. Jesse Bracamonte, a Mayo Clinic family medicine physician, warns, "Smoke, in general, can affect anyone's health, particularly if they're in areas where wildfires are occurring. It can cause anything from [eye](#)

irritation to respiratory infection; Generally, respiratory issues and difficulty breathing; even placing your heart at risk for cardiac strain."

He adds that the smoky conditions can be particularly worrisome for people with preexisting conditions. "Those most at risk include those with underlying cardiac issues or underlying pulmonary issues, such as asthma or COPD," he says.

Dr. Bracamonte advises keeping an eye on air quality measures in your area. "If certain levels are high, it's recommended that you stay indoors," he says. "Try to close up windows as much as possible. Try to make sure you have a central air conditioning system so that the air is circulated in your home appropriately."

He says in some instances where the air quality is poor, you're at high risk and must go outdoors, you might consider the use of a respirator to avoid underlying lung injury.

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