

## Health Advisory regarding Smog

### **What is Smog?**

Smog is derived from the merging of two words; smoke and fog. It is a yellowish or blackish fog formed mainly by a mixture of humid air and pollutants from industries, automobiles, open burning of waste and crops, which consists of fine particles and ground level ozone.

It raises the particulate matter and thus the AQI.

The AQI-Air quality index has been established as a standard by the government to communicate to the public how polluted the air currently is.

As the AQI increases an increasingly large percentage of the population is likely to experience increasingly severe adverse health effects.

An AQI upto 100 is acceptable, beyond 200 is considered to be poor quality, and greater than 400 implies severe deterioration of air quality.

### **How can smog affect your health?**

Exposure to smog can lead to several types of health problems:

- Coughing and throat irritation
- Headache & lowered alertness
- Allergies
- Nausea, vomiting & abdominal pain
- Eye irritation
- Skin irritation
- Worsening of asthma symptoms like wheezing
- Difficulty in breathing and tightness in chest
- Chronic bronchitis
- Increased incidents of heart disease
- Affect lung growth in children

It's important to note that smog affects everyone differently, and some people are more susceptible to its negative effects. Children, senior citizens, and people with asthma need to be especially careful on smoggy days.

### **What can we do to protect ourselves?**

- I. Avoid going out unless absolutely necessary. Morning walks and intensive exercise outdoors must be curtailed.
- II. Wear a mask. A regular surgeon's mask will not offer enough protection, there are masks with N95 or N99 specifications that are recommended. In case you are unable to get a mask, a wet handkerchief or towel to cover the face will offer some protection.
- III. For a long term solution, it is suggested that you grow more plants in your surroundings and in your homes.
- IV. If you are suffering from any acute respiratory or pulmonary disorder, then you may even consider leaving the city till the situation improves-to avoid a major decline in your health.
- V. In case affordable, purchase air purifiers.
- VI. Use car pooling or public transport to reduce the air pollution caused by surface transport.

From the School Doctor  
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