

# WILDFIRES: 98% of People in Canada Living with Asthma Say Poor Air Quality Worsens Their Health

*7 Practical Steps to Keep Your Asthma Managed This Wildfire Season*

TORONTO,, ONTARIO, CANADA, June 12, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As wildfires once again rage across the country, Asthma Canada is urging people living with asthma to take serious precautions. Wildfire smoke contains harmful pollutants, including fine particulate matter that can settle deep in the lungs. For the more than 4.6 million Canadians living with asthma, exposure to smoke can trigger severe symptoms—and, in some cases, lead to fatal asthma attacks.

In Asthma Canada's most recent national survey, A Snapshot of Asthma in Canada, over 1,400 respondents shared how poor air quality—especially from wildfires—has affected their daily lives:

- 98% of respondents said poor air quality worsens their asthma
- 73% said poor air quality has directly caused their asthma to flare up severely

"It's not just about breathing issues—it's about your whole quality of life," said Grace Pyatt, a nurse and professional beach volleyball player from Niagara, Ontario. "I trained outdoors during wildfire



Asthma Canada logo



Jeffrey Beach | President & CEO of Asthma Canada

season, and the smoke made everything harder. I was exhausted, constantly needing my rescue inhaler, and couldn't function outside of training. It took a toll on my mental and physical health—and it made me realize how serious wildfire smoke is for people with asthma.”

The survey also revealed the mental health toll wildfire smoke takes on people with asthma:

- 85% reported a decline in their mental health during times of poor air quality
- 71% experienced anxiety that wildfire smoke could cause their asthma to flare up

“During wildfire season, I’m constantly on edge—worried that my asthma will flare up or that I’ll have a serious attack. It’s a terrifying feeling knowing it can be life-threatening,” said Charly Jarrett, a digital consultant from the West Kootenays, British Columbia. “There’s also a real sense of isolation. While others are outside enjoying the summer, I often have to stay indoors just to stay safe. It can feel incredibly lonely.”

To help individuals protect themselves this summer, Asthma Canada has developed these essential tips:

#### □ 7 Practical Steps to Manage Your Asthma During Wildfire Season

1. Stay informed: Keep track of local air quality updates and wildfire information from reliable sources like Environment Canada, The Weather Network, and the [Government of Canada](#).

2. Have an updated Asthma Action Plan: Your plan should outline steps to take in case of worsening asthma symptoms or emergencies. [Download your plan now](#).

3. Limit outdoor activities: Stay indoors as much as possible. Avoid physical exertion and exercise outdoors during peak pollution periods. If going outside is necessary:

- Wear a well-fitted N95 respirator mask to help protect against smoke particles. These can be purchased at pharmacies and online.
- Keep your reliever (usually blue) inhaler with you at all times in case asthma symptoms arise.
- When driving, keep your windows and vents closed and use air conditioning only in the “recirculate” setting.

4. Use air purifiers and filters in your home: Use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) purifiers and keep windows and doors closed to prevent smoke infiltration. If using an air conditioner, choose the recirculation setting so outside air is not transferred inside. Avoid activities that contribute to indoor air pollution, such as smoking or using strong chemicals.

5. Take your medications as prescribed: Make sure you have necessary medications and supplies readily available and follow your prescribed asthma medication regimen, including both preventive and rescue medications. Consult your healthcare provider if you need to adjust your medication plan during episodes of poor air quality.

6. Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of fluids to keep your airways hydrated. This can help reduce symptoms and keep mucus thin, making it easier to cough up if necessary.

7. Watch [Asthma Canada's Webinar](#): How Air Quality and Wildfires Affect Your Health

In this informative session, respiratory experts Dr. Emily Brigham (Associate Professor, UBC) and Dr. Chris Carlsten (Director, Centre for Lung Health) explain how wildfire smoke and poor air quality affect your lungs—and share practical tips to help you stay healthy during wildfire season.

“Wildfire smoke can make asthma symptoms much worse, and for some, it can be life-threatening,” said Jeffrey Beach, President & CEO of Asthma Canada. “If you have questions or concerns about managing your asthma—especially during wildfire season—we encourage you to reach out to our Asthma & Allergy HelpLine at 1-866-787-4050 or [info@asthma.ca](mailto:info@asthma.ca). Our Certified Respiratory Educators are here to help you breathe easier and stay safe.”

About Asthma Canada:

Asthma Canada is the only national healthcare charity solely dedicated to improving the quality of life for people living with asthma and respiratory allergies. For more than 50 years, Asthma Canada has proudly served as the national voice for people in Canada living with asthma. Our mission is to help people living with asthma lead healthy lives through education, advocacy, and research. Our vision is a future without asthma. For more information, please visit [asthma.ca](http://asthma.ca).

About Asthma in Canada:

- Over 4.6 million people are living with asthma in Canada
- Including over 900,000 children under 19 and over 800,000 adults over 65
- As many as 465,000 people living with asthma in Canada have severe asthma
- Including over 45,000 children under 19
- Asthma is Canada's third most chronic disease
- Over 300 families lose a loved one to asthma each year
- \$4.2 billion is the expected cost of asthma to the Canadian economy by 2030 annually
- 317 people are diagnosed with asthma every day in Canada
- 80,000 visits are made to the emergency room each year because of asthma attacks
- Some people in Canada are hit harder by asthma; it is 40% more prevalent among First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities than the general population in Canada.

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