



## WHAT AIR QUALITY/POLLUTION MEANS TO YOUR HEALTH

The Air Quality Health Index or “AQHI “(see Table below) is a tool that helps you adjust your activity levels according to the levels of air pollution. The AQHI is especially important if you are sensitive to air pollution (if you have underlying lung or heart problems). The AQHI provides advice on how to protect your health during times when air pollution causes low, moderate, high and very high health risks.

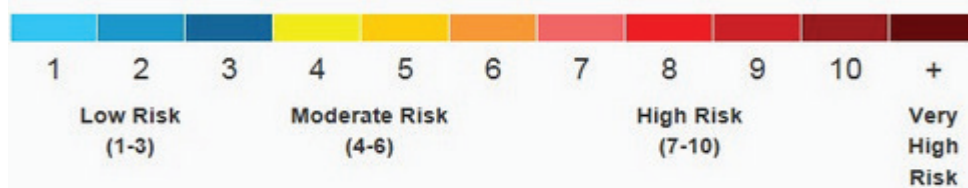
Health Canada recommends you use the AQHI as follows:

<b>Step 1.</b>	When planning outdoor activities, check your local forecast and AQHI conditions:	
	Local AQHI conditions: <a href="https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/index_e.html">https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/index_e.html</a>	
	AQHI Canada app (available for download on iOS and android devices)	
<b>Step 2.</b>	Figure out if you are at risk by asking your doctor or visiting:	
		<a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/air-quality-health-index/health-risks.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/air-quality-health-index/health-risks.html</a>
<b>Step 3.</b>	Review the health messages for your condition (i.e., if you are an “at risk” person and the health risk is “high” at AQHI 7 to 10, you will need to “ <b>reduce</b> ” or reschedule outdoor activities)	
<b>Step 4.</b>	Take action!	

### Understanding Air Quality Health Index Messages

Health Risk	AQHI Category	Health Messages	
		At Risk Population*	General Population
Low	1 to 3	Enjoy your usual outdoor activities.	<b>Ideal</b> air quality for outdoor activities.
Moderate	4 to 6	<b>Consider</b> reducing or rescheduling strenuous outdoor activities if you are experiencing symptoms.	<b>No need to modify</b> your usual outdoor activities unless you experience symptoms of coughing and throat irritation.
High	7 to 10	<b>Reduce</b> or reschedule strenuous outdoor activities. Children and the elderly should also take it easy.	<b>Consider reducing</b> or rescheduling strenuous outdoor activities if you experience symptoms of coughing and throat irritation.
Very High	> 10	<b>Avoid</b> strenuous outdoor activities. Children and the elderly should avoid outdoor physical exertion.	<b>Reduce</b> or reschedule strenuous outdoor activities, especially if you experience symptoms of coughing and throat irritation.

\* People with heart or breathing problems are at greater risk. Follow your doctor’s usual advice about exercising and managing your condition.



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