



WILDFIRE SAFETY TIPS

Learn how wildfires affect children and ways to protect your family.

As wildfires grow in size and frequency, and because of the smoke's ability to travel long distances, it's important that parents and caregivers learn how to protect their families from the harmful effects of wildfire smoke.

Wildfire smoke can have serious effects on children's health across life stages:

Pregnant women	Infants	Young children	Adolescents
<p>Increased risk of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-eclampsia Miscarriage or stillbirths Gestational diabetes Gestational hypertension Preterm labour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low birth weight* Congenital defects Childhood diabetes Death <p><small>*linked to later-life respiratory problems and reduced height-for-age</small></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asthma and respiratory diseases Weaker immune systems Lower brain function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asthma and respiratory diseases Metabolic disorders, e.g. obesity High blood pressure (hypertension) Adverse mental health effects

Signs and symptoms of wildfire smoke exposure in children

- Chest pain and tightness
- Trouble breathing
- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Burning or irritation in the nose, throat and eyes
- Dizziness

If your child is experiencing breathing problems, is unable to sleep, or is experiencing noticeable health problems, take them to a health facility immediately.

How to protect children from wildfire smoke

Being prepared can help your family stay safe and together in an emergency.

- Pay attention to local weather and air quality news and public health advisories, including those related to wildfire smoke.
- Know the symptoms of inhaling wildfire smoke, so you can act immediately to prevent further health problems.

WHAT TO DO

Before a wildfire

- Talk to your family about wildfires, and how you will do everything you can to keep them safe.
- Have an emergency evacuation plan ready, including medical information and what your family should do if separated.
- Identify safe shelters nearby and prepare your children by ensuring that they have your contact information and know what to do if separated.
- Check with your child's school and learn what the school's plan is in case of a wildfire.
- If you live in an area vulnerable to wildfires create a fire-resistant zone around the house.
- Prepare an emergency kit with essential items.

✓ Preparing an emergency kit



During a wildfire

- Evacuate immediately if authorities advise you to do so or if your home is at risk.
- Physically relocate to reduce exposure to wildfire smoke if feasible.
- Keep your children indoors with the doors and windows closed.
- Limit physical activity and drink water to stay hydrated.
- If your child must go outdoors, consider using a N95/KN95 mask.

After a wildfire

- Don't let your children do any clean-up work after a wildfire.
- Remove ash and debris before they return home.
- If your child starts experiencing symptoms, take them to a health facility immediately.
- Pay attention to any physical symptoms or emotional reactions in the months following.

Comforting your children after a wildfire

- Start the conversation and keep it open.
- Provide reassurance.
- Watch for signs of emotional distress.
- Practice calming exercises together.
- Try to maintain some kind of routine.

Learn more about how to protect your child from wildfire smoke: [unicef.org/parenting/emergencies/wildfire-safety-tips](https://www.unicef.org/parenting/emergencies/wildfire-safety-tips)

Read UNICEF's Safe from Wildfire Smoke Report: [unicef.org/media/156676/file/safe-from-wildfire-smoke.pdf.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/156676/file/safe-from-wildfire-smoke.pdf.pdf)

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