



Fact Sheet for people with chronic diseases and the elderly

Key Facts

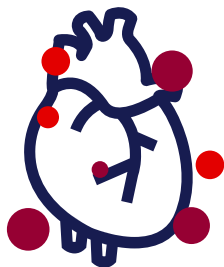
Air pollution is the single largest environmental health risk in Europe. Every year, air pollution causes nearly 500,000 premature deaths. Approximately 290,000 of these deaths occur in high-income countries, and 190,000 in middle-and low-income countries¹.

WHO estimates that in 2016, some 58% of outdoor air pollution-related premature deaths were due to ischemic heart disease and strokes, while 18% of deaths were due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and acute lower respiratory infections respectively, and 6% of deaths were due to lung cancer².

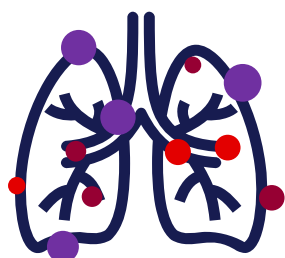
Health effects

Chronic exposure to particulate matters contributes to serious health effects such as: Accelerated aging of the lungs, with loss of lung capacity and decrease of lung function, development of diseases like asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, lung cancer and brain damage, as well as heart diseases and stroke as leading causes of death.

58%



18%



Symptoms like coughing, phlegm, wheezing, chest tightness, chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath and unusual fatigue are the most common symptoms among the people affected by the air pollution.

People with lung disease (Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease—COPD, asthma, lung cancer) or **heart disease** (heart attack, congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease) and **diabetes** are more sensitive to air pollution.

What can you do to protect your health?

- Reduce your outdoor activities on poor, very poor and extremely poor air quality days—check the daily AQI in your area on airqualitykosova.rks-gov.net and ihmk-rks.net/ajri or download **Air Quality in Kosovo** smartphone app by scanning the QR code below.
- Improve & maintain good health and strengthen immune system
- Maintain a healthy diet with lots of fruit and vegetables
- If you must go out when the AQI is poor, it is recommended that a suitable mask is used.
- Know the warning signs of asthma, heart attack and stroke—consult your health care provider.

For more information go to ajri.niph-rks.org



iOS



Android

Download the free smartphone app for real-time information on air pollution.

¹ https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/341137/Fact-Sheet-10-Better-air-for-better-health.pdf

² [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-\(outdoor\)-air-quality-and-health](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-(outdoor)-air-quality-and-health)