



The UK's first-ever National Clean Air Day is a chance for people from all over the country to create cleaner air for everyone

Air pollution is real and harms the health of millions. Unlike other risks to our health, lots of people don't know what causes air pollution, what effects it has on our bodies or how to reduce our exposure to it.

But there are lots of simple things we can do to improve air quality and look after our own and other people's health.

That's what National Clean Air Day is all about. It's a chance to find out more about air pollution, share information with your friends and colleagues, and take action to make the air cleaner and healthier for everyone.

Will you help us and be part of the UK's first ever National Clean Air Day? There are lots of ways to get involved.

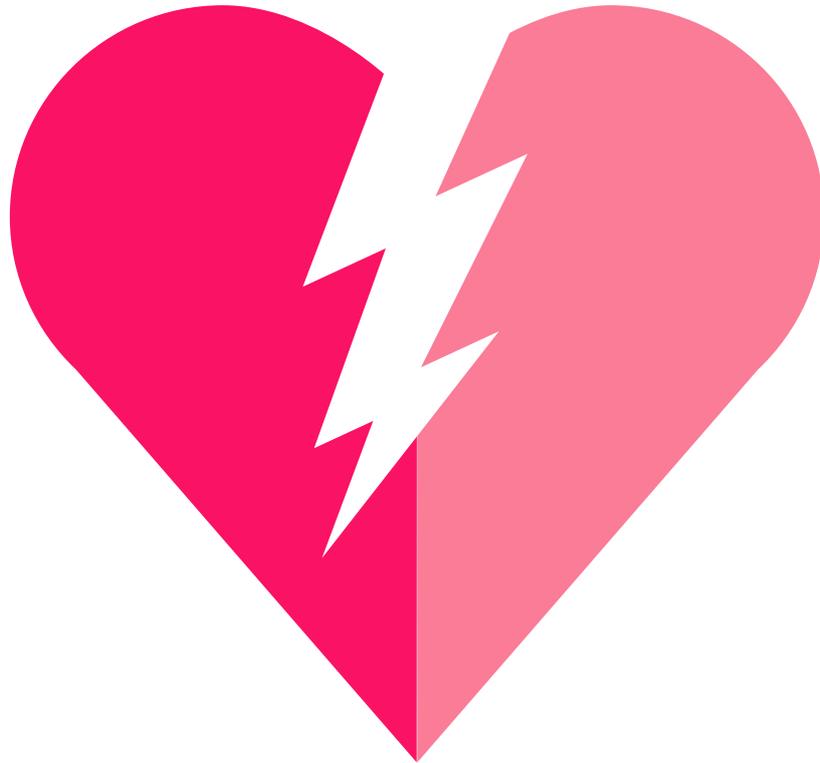
**Reduce**  
the amount of air pollution  
you create

**Talk**  
and join forces to beat  
pollution together

**Avoid**  
harmful air pollution



# Health Impacts of air pollution



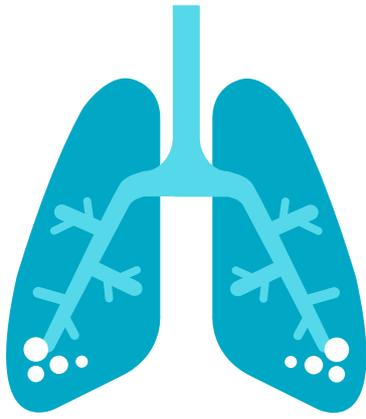
“All of the organs in the body seem to be affected in some way by breathing in air pollution.”

Professor Frank Kelly,  
Director of the Environmental Research Group at King's College London

Did you know that the costs to society of air pollution are similar to those caused by obesity and smoking?

Far from being a new environmental concern, air pollution has been around for a long time and researchers have been studying the effects of air pollution on the nation's health for decades. Air pollution increases the risk of some serious illnesses, and can make existing conditions, like respiratory disorders, worse.





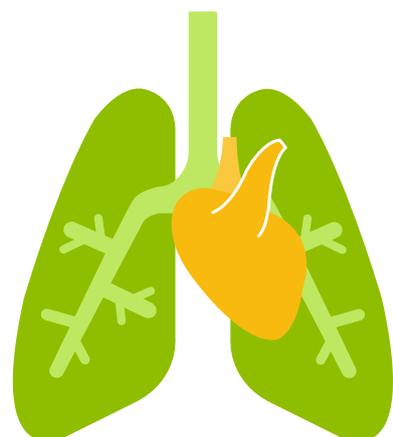
Air pollution increases the risk of getting lung cancer, and contributes to about 1 in 13 cases

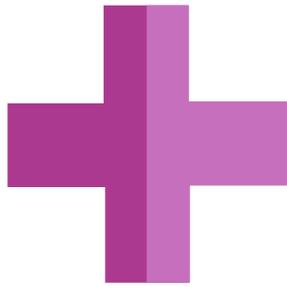
Being exposed to air pollution for a long time is bad for your heart and blood vessels. It is linked to a number of cardiovascular diseases in adults, such as furring of the arteries



Air pollution may increase the risk of bladder cancer

Air pollution increases the risk of death from cardiac and respiratory causes, especially among people with pre-existing cardiac or respiratory conditions





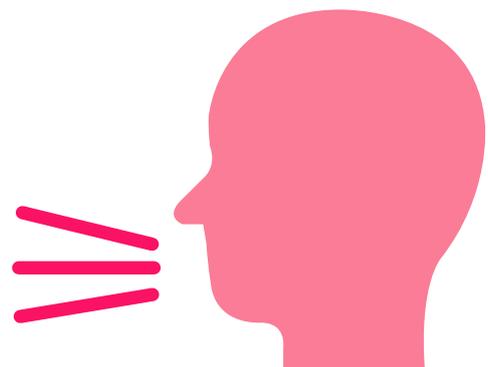
Air pollution leads to more visits to A&E and hospital admissions

Air pollution may increase the risk of type 2 diabetes



People who live near busy roads are more likely to get dementia (but we need to do more research to be sure it's caused by air pollution)

NO<sub>2</sub> (Nitrogen Dioxide) – a common air pollutant – causes coughs and phlegm in adults



# Air pollution and children



“Children’s developing organs and immune systems – and smaller bodies and airways – make them especially vulnerable to dirty air”

Dr Margaret Chan, director,  
General of the WHO

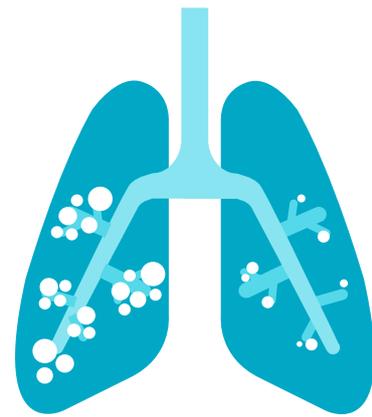
Because children’s lungs are still developing, air pollution can have a bigger impact on children’s health than it does on adults





High air pollution is linked to low birth weight and premature births

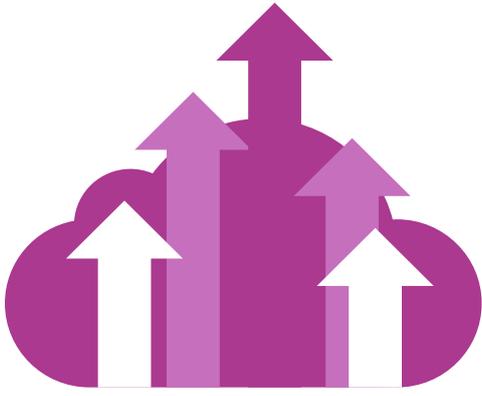
Being exposed to air pollution during pregnancy and after birth affects a baby's lung function development



There is a strong link between air pollution and the worsening of asthma symptoms, it may also play a part in causing asthma in some people

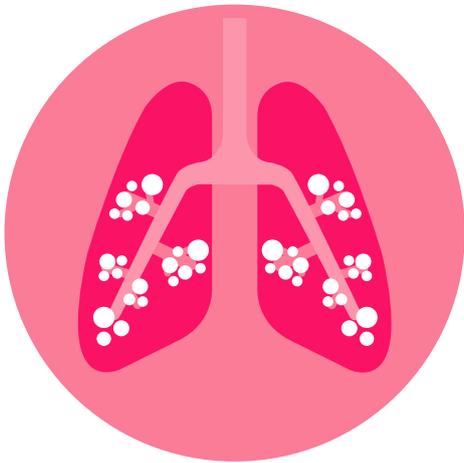
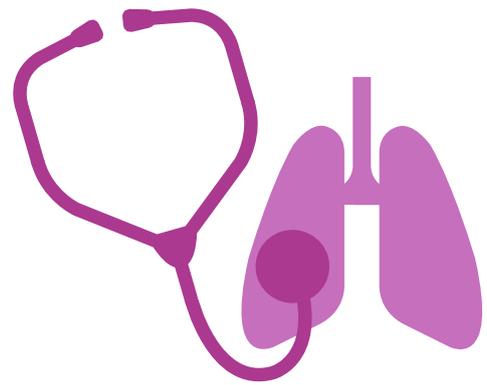
The more children with asthma are exposed to air pollution, the more they suffer with long-term respiratory symptoms





Higher amounts of air pollutants are associated with more asthma attacks, more hospital admissions and a higher mortality rate

Exposure to air pollution is also linked to more coughs and bronchitis



Air pollution can increase the risk of getting bacterial pneumonia

Studies are beginning to show that air pollution affects intelligence, brain development and coordination - but more research is needed





# HOW TO AVOID AND REDUCE AIR POLLUTION

Breathing polluted air isn't a fact of life. There are lots of simple things you can do to improve air quality and protect yourself and your family from the worst air pollution.

Find out how to reduce the amount of air pollution you create, talk and join forces to beat pollution together, and avoid harmful air pollution:

## Reduce, Talk, Avoid.



# Reduce the amount of air pollution you create

## Top 5 things you can do:



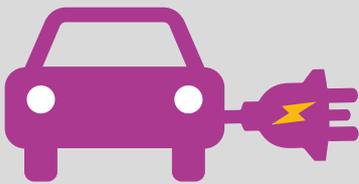
### Use your feet, take to the street

Walk, cycle, bus, tube, tram, boat, unicycle... However you like to travel, leave your car at home and take to the streets. As well as cutting down the amount of pollution you make, you can get some exercise, check out that new deli you've been meaning to pop into, or even meet a friend for a catch-up on the way home.



### Switch your engine off when stationary

Not going anywhere fast? By turning off your car engine whenever you're not moving - only when it's safe for you and other road users to do so - you'll help to make the air cleaner for you, other drivers and pedestrians. Sign up to the #noidling campaign for more info!



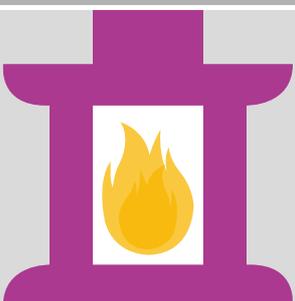
### Drive into the future

Cars may not fly or run on trash yet but we have been back to the future and the future is definitely clean. More than 80,000 people bought low polluting cars in 2016. When you upgrade your car, explore an electric or LPG model (to save on your road tax too - just until we don't need roads). But if you have to use petrol or diesel, ask your car dealer for the least polluting model as they vary enormously.



### Make the courier do the carrying

Many city workplaces report that half of all deliveries are personal parcels for staff. That's a whole lot of extra vans clogging up the city - and people still have to carry their parcels home! Delivery companies now have clever ways to save you carrying parcels too far - like pick up points in corner shops or lockers in train stations. There are thousands of locations around the UK, with a handy map available [here](#).



### Save your log-burner for the bleak midwinter

We all love wood-burning stoves. They look great and they're sooo lovely and cosy. But burning wood produces a lot of air pollutants. To minimise your contribution to air pollution buy a **Defra-approved stove**, use authorised fuel, and only light it when you really really have to. Brrrrr.

# Talk and join forces to beat pollution together

## Top 5 things you can do:



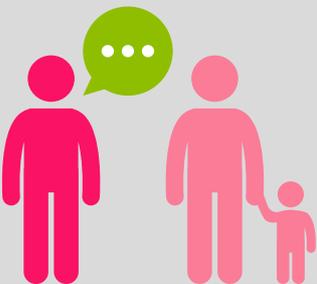
### Talk the talk

Most people don't know how to protect themselves from air pollution. You can help them by sharing our reduce and avoid tips.



### Email or tweet your council

Tell your local councillor that you're worried about air pollution and that you support them taking action to clean up your town's air. You can find their contact details [here](#).



### Share the school run

Chat to other parents at the school gates about setting up a car-share or a walking bus to make the air cleaner for every child at school. Find out how you can cut traffic by 30% with the **WOW Challenge from Living Streets**.

How can I help?

### Don't be afraid to ask

Be bold and ask your children's headteacher or your HR manager how they're helping to make our air cleaner (and if they don't know, point them in the direction of our REDUCE and AVOID tips).

How do you reduce air pollution?

### Urge companies to find a pollution solution

Good companies solve problems. Use email, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram to ask them to come up with low pollution ideas. Great Ormond Street Hospital asked its taxi firms to go electric and now only recommends electric taxis to patients and visitors.

# Avoid harmful air pollution

## Top 5 things you can do:



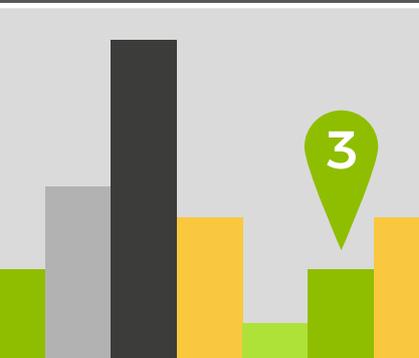
### Discover the side streets

Using quieter streets when you're on a bike or on foot can lower your exposure to air pollution by 20%.



### Get out of your car

Amazingly, car drivers can be exposed to twice as much air pollution as pedestrians and nine times more than a cyclist. So avoid sitting in your car in heavy traffic where pollution can build up and walk or cycle instead.



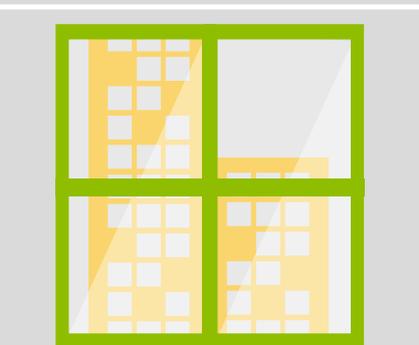
### Get active

Leave your car at home and walk to work or school. You'll create less pollution, breathe less polluted air and get all those wonderful health benefits from exercise.



### Avoid strenuous activity when pollution is high

There are about 10 to 20 high pollution days a year when it's better to avoid working out too hard if you have a heart or lung condition. You can check the pollution in your area for free [here](#). But on balance, for most people, most of the time it is healthier to exercise than sit it out.



### Shut out pollution

Blocking out air pollution helps, so close the windows during rush hour if you live or work on a busy street. But always make sure that your room is well ventilated.



Get involved  
on 15 June

To find out more, visit  
[www.cleanairday.org.uk](http://www.cleanairday.org.uk)

National Clean Air Day is a collaboration of 50+ health institutions,  
local government bodies and universities.  
It is co-ordinated by environmental change charity, Global Action Plan.

