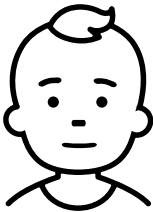




# Additional Guidance for Mask use for Infants and Children during Wildfire Smoke Events

## Infants and children are more sensitive to poor air quality from smoke during wildfire season

- Infants and children take more breaths per minute at rest than adults and breathe in more smoke. They also tend to be more active, and their lungs are also still developing.
- Infants and children with a medical condition such as asthma are more sensitive to smoke and should limit their time outside when significant smoke is present.
- Infants and children who are experiencing new or worsening symptoms during/after smoke exposure should get to clean air and see their healthcare provider if the concern is ongoing.
- When smoke is heavy the best action is to find a space for your infant or child with cleaner air. Staying indoors, closing windows, and running an air purifier with a HEPA filter is recommended. Consider using a DIY air purifier indoors as well: [The BREATHE Project: DIY Air Cleaners – BC Lung Foundation](#)
- Heat is more dangerous in the short term than smoke. When heat and smoke events occur at the same time, prioritize a cool environment over a clean-air environment. You can run fans indoors to stay cool.

Masks provide some protection from smoke but with key limitations and precautions.

Children may wear masks as follows based on age and mask type		
under age 2: none	age 2-3: medical or 3-layer cloth	age 4+: child size N95 (most labelled as age 4-10)
		

- N95's provide the most protection from smoke particulates. Medical masks / 3-layer cloth masks provide less protection.
- Infants and children under age 2 should not use masks due to the risk of smothering/suffocation or choking
- Children older than 2 may wear a mask outdoors in smoky conditions, however they should be always supervised to prevent smothering/suffocation or choking.
- Masks should never be worn when napping / sleeping.
- The risk of overheating is higher than the risk of smoke and a mask should be removed if contributing to overheating.

Remember, it is best to avoid exposure to smoke as opposed to relying on a mask – balancing the risk of not spending time outside, exercising, living life.

If you're not sure what the best course of action is for you and your child, you can always reach out to your primary care provider / family doctor, pediatrician, community health centre, or Health Links – Info-Santé at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 (available 24 hours a day, everyday).

For more information on current air quality conditions and who is most at risk from smoke please visit: [Manitoba - Air Quality Health Index \(AQHI\) - Environment Canada](#)

For additional information on masks and smoke please visit:  
[BCCDC\\_WildFire\\_FactSheet\\_FaceMasks.pdf](#)