

HAZE

Compass Health · Oct 2019

Haze is air pollution caused by particulate matter suspended in the air, composed of microscopic droplets so small they can get deep into our lungs and cause many adverse health effects.

The recent haze has resulted in a jump in the number of respiratory problems, sickness absenteeism, and increased healthcare utilization in Southeast Asia.

WHO ARE MORE SENSITIVE TO HAZE?



Children



Elderly



People with existing chronic lung or heart disease (eg: asthma, COPD)

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Minimize outdoor activities, outdoor sports, and physical exertion!
- Close all windows, doors, or openings.
- Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of water!
- Cut down on coffee, tea, and alcohol as they may lead to dehydration.
- Avoid smoking and use of candles, incense, or burning any material that emits smoke.
- Use an air purifier: Regularly replace filters to keep particulate levels low.
- Avoid driving if visibility is poor: Roll up windows, turn on headlights, and use internal circulation mode.
- Ensure medications are on hand for those with existing heart and lung conditions.

PROTECT YOURSELF

Use an N95 respirator mask!
N95 masks are reusable, fitted with the right filter, seal better, and restrict haze pollutants from entering the respiratory system.
N95 masks are not needed in an indoor environment or for short exposures, like commuting from home to work.

6 steps to wearing the N95 mask

1. Wash your hands.
2. Select a mask that fits well.
3. Hold mask in hand and place firmly over nose, mouth, and chin.
4. Stretch and position bottom band under ears. Stretch and position top band at back of head.
5. Press thin wire gently against bridge of nose.
6. Perform fit check: Check for leakage of air around face.

Should you experience breathing difficulties or discomfort upon exposure to haze, seek medical attention immediately!

EFFECTS



- Eye irritation, watery eyes, and/or conjunctivitis (a type of eye inflammation)



- Runny nose, sneezing



- Throat irritation, dry throat, sore throat and/or coughing



- Upper respiratory tract infections



- Headache, dizziness, fatigue and/or stress

 “Breathing is the greatest pleasure in life.” – *Giovanni Papini*

References:

<http://www.moh.gov.my/index.php/pages/view/192>

<https://www.moh.gov.sg/resources-statistics/educational-resources/haze/faqs-on-haze-health-advisory>