10 Health Facts You Need To Know

1. Pittsburgh ranks as one of the top 25 most polluted cities in the nation in regard to year-round particle pollution (PM2.5). [1, 3]

2. Allegheny County ranks in the top 1 percent of counties in the U.S. for cancer risk from air pollution. [2]

3. Our air poses a significant threat to public health with an increased risk of heart and lung disease, asthma, diabetes, cancer and premature death. [1, 3, 6]

4. Asthma, cardiovascular disease and stroke can be aggravated by short-term exposure to particulate pollution. [7]

5. Suspected carcinogens in air pollution are associated with lung cancer, bladder cancer and childhood leukemia. [6]

6. Air pollution may be the cause of neurodevelopmental disorders (autism spectral) and neurodegenerative disorders (Parkinson’s, ALS, Alzheimer’s), which have increased at alarming rates in recent decades. [6]

7. Low birth weight and developmental effects in babies are linked to chronic exposures to toxic air pollutants and particulate matter. [6]

8. Air pollution has been linked with pregnancy and birth complications among women living in Allegheny County, including increased risk of preeclampsia, gestational hypertension and preterm births. [1]

9. Fine particulate matter may alter metabolism in genetically susceptible populations, leading to higher body mass index (BMI) and obesity. [6]

10. The construction of the Shell Petrochemical facility in Beaver County could erase 30 years’ worth of regional air quality improvements and bring a variety of health risks from the VOCs it will emit. [5]

Our Region’s Air IS STILL POLLUTED
MONITORS SHOW OUR REGION’S POOR AIR IS CAUSED MOSTLY BY LOCAL SOURCES

- In 2022, air quality in the Pittsburgh region was considered NOT GOOD for 204 days (over 1/2 of the time). [3]

- From 2020-2022, one regional air monitor registered particulate matter (PM 2.5) concentrations worse than 90% of the U.S. [3]

- From 2020-2022, three out of 4 monitors in the Pittsburgh region had PM 2.5 levels worse than 50% of the U.S. [3]

- For 2020-2022, four of the Pittsburgh region’s 7 ozone monitors ranked in the worst 50% nationally. [3]


3. Pittsburgh’s Air Quality Data Analysis by John Graham, Ph. D., Clean Air Task Force 2023.


7. Kurt Straif, Aaron Cohen, Jonathan Sament, “Air Pollution and Cancer” Page 166-168 of the report, “Although the studies were limited in scope, the results indicate that the joint contribution may be substantial.”

8. Pa. Dept. of Health Asthma Prevalence Fact Sheet 2021

9. “Case-Crossover Analysis of Air Pollution and Cardiorespirator Hospitalizations: Using Routinely Collected Health and Environmental Data for Tracking”

10. The Lancet Commission on Pollution and Health, Oct. 19, 2017