

## 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 (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). [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, 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. Corporations like US Steel and Shell repeatedly violate air emissions regulations, and they seem undeterred by fines. [4, 5]

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### **Our Region's Air IS STILL POLLUTED**

#### **MONITORS SHOW OUR REGION'S POOR AIR IS CAUSED MOSTLY BY LOCAL SOURCES**

- In 2023, air quality in the Pittsburgh region was considered "Moderate" (PM<sub>2.5</sub> 51-100) to "Unhealthy" (PM<sub>2.5</sub> 101-150) for 263 days due to PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels, more than half of the year. [3] Air quality unhealthy days increased 2021-2023 primarily due to wildfires and better air quality data during the pandemic in 2020 is no longer included.
- From 2021-2023, the Liberty/Clairton air monitor registered particulate matter (PM 2.5) concentrations worse than 90% of the U.S. [3]
- From 2021-2023, 10 out of 12 monitors in the Pittsburgh region had annual PM 2.5 levels worse than 50% of the U.S. [3]
- For 2021-2023, 8 out of 12 monitors in the Pittsburgh region had daily PM 2.5 levels worse than 50% of the U.S. [3]

## SOURCES

1. ["State of the Air, 2024." American Lung Association, 2024.](#)
2. [National Air Toxics Assessment and Cancer Risk in Allegheny County Pennsylvania Updated – May 2021.](#) Cancer & Environment Network of Southwestern Pennsylvania
3. Pittsburgh's Air Quality Data Analysis by John Graham, Ph. D., Clean Air Task Force 2024.
4. Allegheny County Health Department. [Enforcement Actions.](#) 2020-2024
5. Reid Frazier. ["Shell's air pollution violations result in \\$10 million fine for Beaver County ethane cracker."](#) State Impact Pennsylvania. May 25, 2023
6. Laden, F.; Schwartz, J.; Speizer, F.; and Dockery, D. ["Reduction in Fine Particulate Air Pollution and Mortality: Extended Follow-up of the Harvard Six Cities Study,"](#) 2006.
7. Kurt Straif, Aaron Cohen, Jonathan Samet, ["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](#)