

WHAT IS PM2.5?

This is Larry. Larry is a PM2.5 fine particle. He and his mates live in smoke from fires.



Larry's not the only thing that lives there. Smoke is a mixture of particles, water vapour and gases. But Larry is the biggest troublemaker.



Larry's microscopic. He's so tiny that 40 Larrys could lay side by side on the width of a human hair.

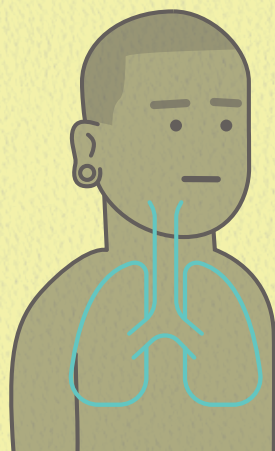
← 40 Larrys →

← Hair →

Because Larry and his friends are so small, they can get into all the places they shouldn't be.



They can get right down deep into your respiratory system and hang out in your lungs.



If it's smoky outside, check for fire warnings in your area by visiting emergency.vic.gov.au



Visit epa.vic.gov.au/your-environment/air/smoke for more information about smoke and your health.



Environment Protection Authority Victoria



HOW CAN SMOKE EXPOSURE AFFECT MY HEALTH?

Smoke from fires not only signals a threat to your safety, it can also be a risk to your health.



The effects of smoke exposure can vary. Health effects could be as simple as itchy eyes and a sore throat, but it can be something more serious for some people.

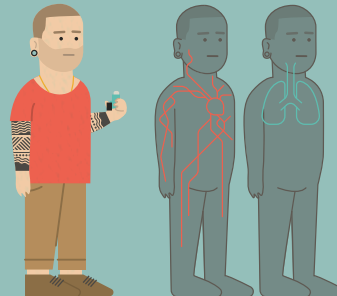


Fine particles like Larry can cause some short-term or long-term effects on your respiratory or cardiovascular systems



PM2.5

That could mean big problems for your heart and lungs, especially if you have asthma or other lung conditions.



Symptoms of short-term smoke irritation such as itchy eyes, sore throat, runny nose and coughing usually clear up in healthy adults once they're away from the smoke.



If you are experiencing any symptoms that may be due to smoke exposure, seek medical advice or call NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 60 60 24.

Anyone experiencing wheezing, chest tightness or difficulty breathing should call 000.



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WHO IS MORE SENSITIVE TO THE EFFECTS OF SMOKE EXPOSURE?

I love to hang out in smoke from fires.




Larry is a PM2.5 fine particle. He irritates some people more than others.

Kids up to 14 and adults over 65, smokers, pregnant women and people with a heart or lung condition can have a much tougher time putting up with Larry. Their symptoms can get worse at lower smoke concentrations compared to other people



Kids are also more at risk because their respiratory systems are still developing, they often run around and they breathe in more air per body weight than adults.



MORE SMOKE = MORE LARRYS.



So when it's smoky outside, look out for kids, neighbours over 65, or other people at risk.



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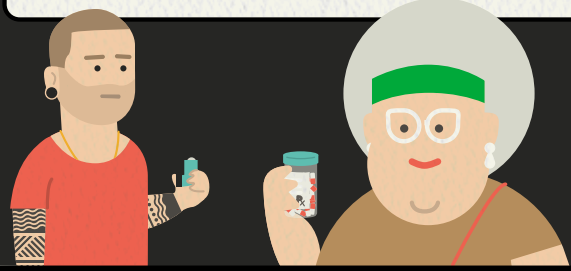


HOW CAN I PROTECT MY HEALTH WHEN IT'S SMOKY OUTSIDE?

Fine particles like Larry can affect your health when it's smoky outside. If you're not under threat from a fire, stay inside with the windows and doors closed, and reduce physical activity.

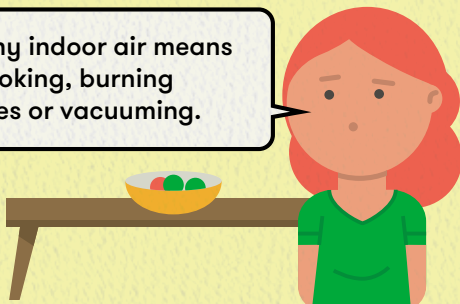


If you have a heart or lung condition, including asthma, make sure you take your medications and follow your treatment plan.

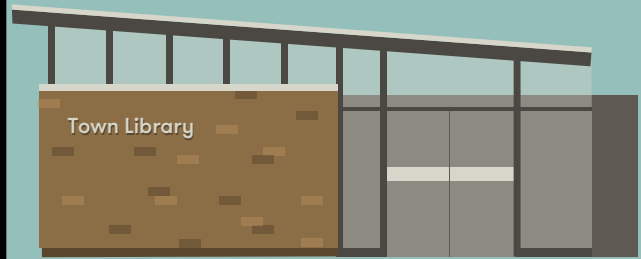


Keep the air inside your home as healthy as possible. If you have an air conditioner, switch it to "recirculate" or "re-use".

Healthy indoor air means no smoking, burning candles or vacuuming.

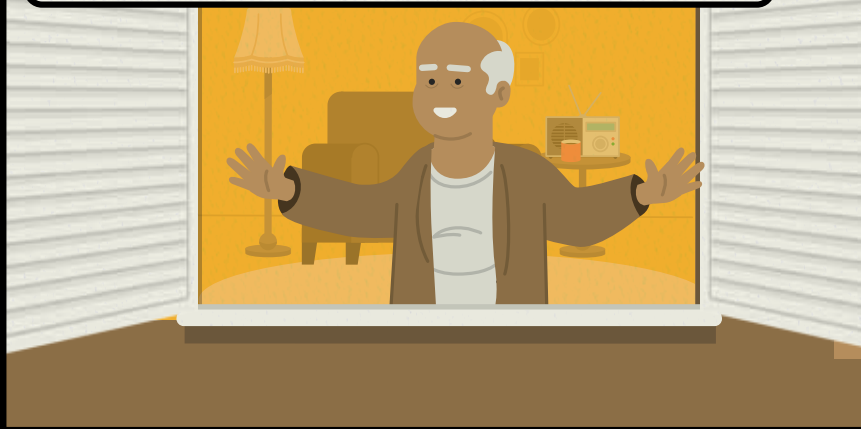


If your home is uncomfortable, and it's safe to do so, take a break away from the smoke or visit an air-conditioned centre like a library.



And when there's a break in the smoke, open your windows and doors to get rid of any smoke inside the house.

See ya later, Larry.



Keep Larry out of your lungs. Stay safe and keep your airways clear.



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