



# Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States  
Pulmonary Environmental Health Specialty Unit



## The Unique Vulnerability of Pregnant People

### Did you know?

**W**hen someone is pregnant, they are more affected by their environment. Pregnancy brings changes in the body, like different hormones, the need for more food and air, and changes in how the heart works. These changes can make pregnant people more affected by things like air pollution and extreme heat. Pregnancy can also increase the risk of conditions like high blood pressure. Pregnant people are also more vulnerable to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

**Pregnant people are more affected by their environment**

They breathe more.

They eat more.

Their heart works harder.

They're more sensitive to heat.

**Multiple environmental factors can influence reproductive health:**

- Toxins including pesticides, endocrine disruptors, metals, air pollution, solvents
- Radiation
- Stress
- Nutrition
- Climate change
- Infectious agents such as:
  - Viruses (CMV, varicella, herpes)
  - Bacteria (syphilis, listeria)
  - Parasites (toxoplasmosis, Zika, rubella)



### Take Action

#### RESOURCES

Pay special attention to these things that you are more vulnerable to while pregnant:

- ✓ Indoor air
- ✓ Outdoor air
- ✓ Heat stress
- ✓ Climate change
- ✓ Natural disasters



For details on specific exposures and health risks, check out all the [Prescriptions for Prevention](#), in English and Spanish!