

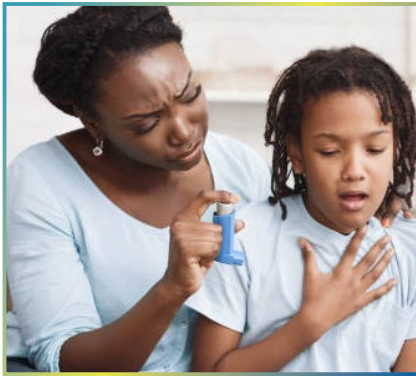


# Prescriptions for PREVENTION



Guidance from the Western States  
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit

## Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) Environmental Exposure



### Did you know?

**P**olycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are a group of over 100 chemicals that are generated by burning wood, oil, gas, garbage, agricultural waste, meat, or tobacco. We are exposed through breathing, food, and skin absorption. PAHs can trigger or worsen asthma in children, increase the risk of cancer, and have effects on developing babies.



### Do

- ✓ **Stop smoking** if possible.
- ✓ If you have multiple options for outdoor activity, **choose activities that are further from major roadways**, rail yards, heavy industry or ports. But don't let that get in the way of getting outside!
- ✓ **Follow the EPA Air Quality Index (AQI)** activity recommendations (e.g., limit outdoor activities etc.), especially if your child has asthma or another respiratory condition.
  - ✓ The AQI is at [airnow.gov](http://airnow.gov) and a cellphone app can be downloaded.
- ✓ **Try to carpool**, take public transportation or use electric vehicles.
- ✓ **Reduce indoor air pollutant exposure:**
  - ✓ HEPA filter air purifiers can reduce some levels of PAHs indoors. When cooking, use ventilation (windows, range hood);
  - ✓ If you have a HVAC system, choose **MERV filters** rated at 13 or higher and replace as directed.
- ✓ **Avoid dietary exposures**, such as charbroiled, chargrilled, and smoked meats, fish, and foods.



### Don't

- ✗ **Don't allow any smoking** in your home or car.
- ✗ **Don't burn anything indoors**, including in-home fireplaces and incense, if you can avoid it.
- ✗ **Don't burn wood**, leaf piles, or garbage.
- ✗ **Don't idle a motor vehicle** or other oil or gas burning appliance inside your garage, even if the door is open.



For more information, scan the code or visit  
[wspehsu.ucsf.edu/prescriptions-for-prevention-environmental-hazards](http://wspehsu.ucsf.edu/prescriptions-for-prevention-environmental-hazards)

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