



MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 31st January 2019

AIR QUALITY AROUND TASMANIA

Air quality can affect people's health, with current air quality within southern Tasmania from the bushfires having the potential to cause similar suffering to those with smoking-related emphysema.

Smoke particles are tiny and can aggravate your asthma and other respiratory diseases and can increase symptoms of chronic conditions. Smoke inhalation can raise your pulse rate; cause shortness of breath, increased coughing, as a result of reduced oxygen in the bloodstream.

AMA Tasmania member General Practitioner Dr Bob Walker suggests patients with respiratory issues such as asthma and emphysema keep asthma relievers on hand, consider using spacers if necessary and keeping an eye on smoke levels, where possible continue to monitor the changing conditions which can be affected by swift changes in weather.

Dr Walker also recommended remaining indoors, with air conditioners, both in homes and cars switched to recycle mode. For those in the community without access to air conditioners, patients might consider visiting friends and family, or perhaps a local shopping centre if smoke levels become a problem.

Generally, maintaining a person's usual exercise habit is acceptable however with the smoky conditions it is recommended avoiding vigorous exercise and all outside activity at the moment.

Dr Walker encouraged the community to be in touch with their GP for immediate medical advice or assistance via telephone. Particular attention should be given to ensuring the welfare of our community members who are elderly, young children, and those with chronic respiratory conditions.

For up to information on the air quality in Tasmania head to <https://epa.tas.gov.au/epa/air>

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