



How Climate Change Affects Your Health

According to the World Health Organization, climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. We are already feeling the effects here in Canada, and its impacts are escalating:



Heat Waves can produce heat stroke, aggravate lung and heart conditions, put people in the hospital, and cause premature deaths. Extremely hot days are expected to double or triple over the next 30 years if we do not slow climate emissions. They are particularly dangerous for older people, very young people, and people with chronic diseases.



Air Pollution produces approximately 14,000 early deaths each year in Canada. It increases the risk of heart disease, strokes, lung cancer, and respiratory disease, as well as aggravating existing heart and lung conditions. Climate change can make air quality worse by increasing wildfires, dust from droughts, and spikes in pollen.



Mental Health Impacts can result from extreme weather events and evacuations, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). People can also feel anxious about the threat that climate change presents to their homes, communities, and way of life.



Vector-Borne Diseases linked to mosquitoes, ticks, and other “vectors” are spreading across Canada due to conditions created by climate change. For example, Lyme Disease has spread across several provinces and affected over 2,000 people, while West Nile Virus has affected more than 6,000 Canadians in two decades.



Extreme Weather Events are increasing in frequency and severity due to climate change. Approximately 200 disaster-level extreme weather events were reported in Canada in the last decade, putting us at risk of injury and death. They can also cut us off from safe water, power, food supplies, emergency services, and health care.



Water and Food Security are threatened by climate change. Flooding can contaminate drinking water and crops. Droughts, high temperatures, rising sea levels, and melting permafrost can threaten water supplies, disrupt food supplies, and harm crops. Power outages may lead to food-borne illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths.

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What's Next?

Unchecked, climate change will put the lives of hundreds of millions of people at risk each year. However, solutions exist, and many will produce immediate health benefits for Canadians. **To avoid the worst impacts of climate change, we must act now.**

For more information about the health impacts linked to climate change and how to protect your family, see the federal government's Climate Change Public Health Factsheets: <http://tiny.cc/cchealth>



For more details about climate change and its solutions, check out CAPE's Climate Change Toolkit for Health Professionals: <http://tiny.cc/healthtoolkit>

