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Personal strategies to minimise effects of air pollution on respiratory health: advice for providers, patients and the public

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This article draws on published literature and evidence to provide clear guidance on personal strategies that can help providers, patients and the public minimise daily exposure to air pollution in order to benefit respiratory health <http://bit.ly/2lmbydp>

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ABSTRACT As global awareness of air pollution rises, so does the imperative to provide evidence-based recommendations for strategies to mitigate its impact. While public policy has a central role in reducing air pollution, exposure can also be reduced by personal choices. Qualified evidence supports limiting physical exertion outdoors on high air pollution days and near air pollution sources, reducing near-roadway exposure while commuting, utilising air quality alert systems to plan activities, and wearing facemasks in prescribed circumstances. Other strategies include avoiding cooking with solid fuels, ventilating and isolating cooking areas, and using portable air cleaners fitted with high-efficiency particulate air filters. We detail recommendations to assist providers and public health officials when advising patients and the public regarding personal-level strategies to mitigate risk imposed by air pollution, while recognising that well-designed prospective studies are urgently needed to better establish and validate interventions that benefit respiratory health in this context.