



Particulates

Fact Sheet

The term **fine particles**, or **particulate matter 2.5 (PM2.5)**, refers to very tiny particles or droplets in the air that are 2½ microns or less wide. Several thousand of these particulates could fit on the period at the end of this sentence. These invisible particles can remain in the air for hours or week before settling. These particulates are able to travel deeply into the lungs and exposure to them can cause short-term eye, nose, throat and lung irritation, coughing, sneezing, runny nose and shortness of breath. Exposure to fine particles may can be an asthma trigger.

Common sources of fine particles:

- Fuel Burning Space Heaters
- Burning Candles
- Pet Dander
- Pollen
- Dust Mites
- Cooking
- Fireplaces
- Smoke
- Dust

Recommended Action:



Reduce dust mites by covering mattresses and pillows in zippered dust-proof covers.



Vacuum and mop your house once or twice weekly. Use a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter.



Install a high-efficiency media filter in the furnace and the air conditioner. We recommend a filter with a MERV rating of at least 9.

This research was conducted by the University of Louisville's Center for Integrative Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS grant P30 ES030283). CIEHS strives to inform the public on environmental health science and build transparent relationships with surrounding communities to support healthier lifestyles. For more information regarding The Center for Integrative Environmental Health Science, please visit <https://louisville.edu/ciehs>.



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