



## Fact Sheet: Air Pollution & Higher Risk Groups

*The American Lung Association State of the Air 2008 highlights at-risk populations affected by ozone and particle pollution. Many groups of people are at particularly increased risk when exposed to air pollution because of their age or because they suffer from chronic lung or cardiovascular disease, or diabetes. These at-risk groups include:*

### **People with Asthma**

Over 2.2 million children and 5.5 million adults with asthma live in parts of the U.S. with very high levels of ozone. Nearly 5 million adults and over 1.9 million children with asthma live in areas with high levels of short-term particle pollution. Nearly 3 million adults and over 1.2 million children with asthma live in counties with unhealthy levels of year-round particle pollution.

### **Older and Younger**

Over 10.2 million adults age 65 and over and nearly 24 million children under age 18 live in counties with unhealthy ozone levels. Over 9.4 million seniors and 20.6 million children live in counties with unhealthy short-term levels of particle pollution. Over 5.5 million seniors and 13 million children live in counties with unhealthy levels of year-round particle pollution.

### **Chronic Bronchitis and Emphysema**

Nearly 2.9 million people with chronic bronchitis and over 1.2 million with emphysema live in counties with unhealthy ozone levels. Nearly 2.6 million people with chronic bronchitis and 1.1 million with emphysema live in counties with unhealthy levels of short-term particle pollution. Over 1.5 million people with chronic bronchitis and over 644,000 with emphysema live in counties with unhealthy year-round levels of particle pollution.

### **Cardiovascular Disease**

Nearly 20.1 million people with cardiovascular diseases live in areas with unhealthy levels of short-term particle pollution; nearly 12 million live in counties with unhealthy levels of year-round particle pollution. Cardiovascular disease includes coronary heart disease, heart attacks, strokes, hypertension and angina pectoris.

### **Diabetes**

Over 4.6 million people with diabetes live in areas with unhealthy levels of short-term particle pollution; over 2.7 million live in counties with unhealthy levels of year-round particle pollution. Research indicates that diabetics face increased risk due to particle pollution impact on their cardiovascular systems.