



## AWARENESS

# 91% OF US BREATHE DIRTY AIR, AN INCREDIBLE FIGURE

**91%. That's not a mistake. Polluted air does harm, and most people are exposed to it. The World Health Organization calls air pollution 'a major environmental risk to health'.**

The WHO says that heart and lung disease, including asthma, would improve if we didn't breathe polluted air.

There's a long way to go, though - In 2016, 91% of the world population was breathing air that was below WHO guidelines.

- 91% of the premature deaths from air pollution are in lower- and middle-income areas, mostly in Asia,
- smoke from indoor cooking is a major issue affecting the poor,
- three billion people cook and heat their homes with biomass, kerosene fuels and coal.

### **How do you know if the air you are breathing is dirty?**

AirNow, a US government website with air quality data, gives some clues. For example, on a hot windless day, the air can feel heavy, and it can smell bad. It might make your chest feel tight, or make you cough.

Exhaust fumes and polluted air to avoid appears hazy and brown, according to the website.

### **What to do?**

Air Quality India (AQI), suggests reducing air pollution by using public transport, minimizing electricity consumption, recycling, and reusing what you can, using fewer plastic bags, avoiding products containing harsh chemicals, and supporting the planting of trees (afforestation).