



AAFA Statement on Inhalers and Greenhouse Gases

November 14, 2019

A [recent study](#) found that the delivery system used for some asthma medicines (gases used in metered dose inhalers) may have a negative impact on global warming. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America believes patients, healthcare providers, and policy makers must keep these findings in perspective. Over 3,600 people die each year from asthma. AAFA urges those with asthma to continue taking their asthma medicines as advised by their health care provider. Asthma can be fatal without proper treatment. Different asthma medicines work well for different people and [switching to a new medicine may be inappropriate](#).

AAFA supports clean air policies and encourages people to take steps to reduce our individual contributions to climate change. However, we recommend focus remain on other large-scale improvements we can make to reduce carbon footprints, methane and ozone emissions. When pharmaceutical manufacturers develop a different delivery system for a particular medication, patients can then talk to their doctors to see whether switching is appropriate.

Air pollution is linked to the [development and worsening of asthma](#) as well as heart disease and other life-threatening conditions. Recently released [data](#) from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) shows that air pollution in the United States has worsened from 2017 to 2018, resulting in an additional 10,000 deaths compared to the 2016 benchmark. These deaths could have been [prevented](#) had the air quality remained the same, or policies like the [Clean Air Act](#) been more actively enforced by the EPA. Environmental policy rollbacks are putting our air and health at risk. For instance, the EPA proposed adjustments to weaken regulations for the oil and gas industry's methane emissions that could greatly impact health and mortality not to mention deter the promising steps America has made in slowing climate change. In fact, a [report](#) completed by EPA scientists estimates that by 2025 ozone-related health effects from the oil and natural gas industry would contribute to 1,970 premature deaths, 39,000 individuals with upper and lower respiratory issues, 3,600 emergency room visits, and 1.1 million asthma attacks due to the emissions. Those are lives that can be spared if policies are enacted and enforced to keep our air healthy.