

**Title: The Impact of Climate Change on our Patients' Health and the Family Physician's Role**

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**Abstract:** Climate change continues to have a detrimental effect on the overall health of people globally. The average yearly temperature has continually risen since the late nineteenth century and is projected to continue to rise for decades ahead. Increased temperature has been linked to decreased sleep quality and increases in heat stroke and pregnancy complications. Adverse effects on cardiopulmonary health have been linked to climate change. Air pollution is correlated to an increased risk of myocardial infarctions and aggravation of symptoms pertaining to asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD). Lengthening of the pollination season because of warmer weather due to climate change has led to an increase in allergic-related rhinitis and asthma. Temperature increases have caused a lengthening of the transmission season of infectious disease, especially vector and water-borne diseases. Infectious disease has begun to spread to new areas globally due to increased temperatures, rainfall and flooding attributed to climate change. The mental health impacts attributed to climate change are escalating, including depression and anxiety. With increasing amounts of floods and hurricanes, people of certain geographic areas can experience an increase in acute stress, possibly leading to chronic PTSD. Family physicians are at the forefront of advising patients on how to handle the health effects of climate change. In addition to climate change's impact on health, patients of lower socioeconomic status are more at risk because of lack of adequate resources and financial stability. Through detailed histories, family physicians have an opportunity to identify affected patients and intervene earlier.