Preparing for Wildfire Season

- Read the BCCDC fact sheets on Wildfire Smoke.
- Learn about the Air Quality Health Index.
- Consider preparing printouts of key BCCDC fact sheets for your patients, such as:
  - Health effects of wildfire smoke
  - How to prepare for the wildfire smoke season
  - Portable air cleaners for wildfire smoke
  - Face masks for wildfire smoke
  - Wildfire smoke and outdoor exercise
- Stock an adequate supply of corticosteroid and bronchodilator inhalers.
- For Pharmacy owners consider improving air quality at the workplace.
- Recommend patients have at least 5 days extra supply of medications.¹
- Ask higher risk patients² if they are informed; refer them to relevant resources.
- Ask patients with asthma and COPD if they:
  - Have an up-dated written action plan.
  - Asthma Action Plan for Adults
  - Asthma Action Plan for Children
  (Punjabi and Chinese language available for Children’s action plan)
  - Know how to recognize and treat worsening symptoms.
  - Have an adequate supply of their rescue medications mentioned in the action plan.

During Wildfire season or smoke exposure in your community

- Maintain an adequate supply of corticosteroid and bronchodilator inhalers.
- Stay tuned to local air quality reports and advisories through local radio, television, social media: Air Quality Advisories, Air Quality Health Index, provincial advisories, road and weather conditions for driving.
- Emphasize minimising exposure to smoke, especially for people at higher risk².
- Remind patients with asthma and COPD to:
  - Carry their bronchodilator (reliever) inhaler with them at all times.
  - Follow their written action plan if symptoms worsen.
  - See their physician if not responding to treatment.
- Remind higher risk patients² of optional medication delivery services, where available.
- Clarify the role of N95 respirators for the public and refer outdoor workers to WorkSafe BC³.

During states of emergency and evacuations⁴

- Follow evacuation orders.
- For owners of evacuated pharmacies, consider opening a temporary pharmacy in a new location.
- Dispense an emergency supply of medication to displaced patients during a state of emergency.

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¹. Helpful during an evacuation but also limits urgent need to travel to the pharmacy during days of poor air quality.
². People with chronic diseases (asthma, COPD, heart disease), pregnant women, infants, young children, older adults.
⁴. Evacuation stages: evacuation alert (be ready to leave), evacuation order (leave the area immediately), evacuation rescind (you can return home, stay tuned for other evacuation alerts or orders). (42)