



What is climate change and how does it affect our health?

Climate change is the long-term increase in global temperatures primarily expedited by human activity. Wildfires, storms, droughts, floods, heat domes, and other extreme events caused by climate change negatively affect humans both acutely and chronically. Wildfires cause cardiorespiratory problems and burns, floods increase risk of contracting zoonotic diseases, and rising temperatures lead to heat stroke. As well, climate change leads to food insecurity, forced displacement, malnutrition, poverty, and much more. There is a direct link between the earth's climate and human health.



What can nurses do about climate change?

Nurses help communities adapt to climate change, advocate on behalf of patients and the environment, engage in sustainable practices, and lead changes to create a better future. Read more on how nurses can become involved.

Develop a *Climate Action Plan*

Contribute the unique nursing perspective to create achievable climate change goals. Work with multi-sector professionals to assess current emissions, establish reduction targets, and implement changes.

Prepare for emerging needs

Stay up to date with evolving science and information as it applies to health and climate change. Speak with patients, coworkers, family members, and others to prepare for climate change events. Share physical and mental health resources and discuss action plans.

Start a green team

Start a workplace green team. Conduct a waste management audit, implement a sorting and recycling program, restore and donate unused tools and equipment, or even grow a workplace garden.



Talk with patients and clients

Create awareness by informing patients about the realities of climate change and the impacts on human health. Discuss how climate change can affect physical, mental, and emotional health.

Advocate for equity and sustainability

Climate change disproportionately impacts some populations. Create awareness about the social determinants of health and current health inequities exacerbated by climate change. Advocate for broader, more accessible, appropriate care and public services for Indigenous, rural, remote, and underserved communities.

Encourage greener lifestyle choices

Promote healthy, sustainable lifestyle choices that reduce carbon emissions and do not harm other people or aspects of the environment. Consider a greener commute, choose seasonal produce, and purchase sustainable items that reinvest into local communities.

Learn more

Nursing plays an essential role in mitigating the harms of climate change on human health and in making steps toward a more climate change-resilient future. Find more information:

-  [The Role of Nursing in Climate Change: Actions for Nurses in a Changing World](#)
-  [Nursing and Climate Change: The Impacts on Human Health](#)
-  [NNPBC Position Statement: Engaging BC Nurses with Climate Change Issues](#)

