

# Thailand air pollution leads millions to seek medical help

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About 2.4 million people in Thailand have sought hospital treatment for medical problems linked to air pollution since the start of the year, health officials said, as toxic smog chokes parts of the country.

Bangkok and the northern city of Chiang Mai were among the most polluted cities in the world on Thursday morning, according to air quality monitoring firm IQAir.

The [poor air quality](#) has seen 2.4 million people seek medical treatment since the start of the year, with 184,465 hospital admissions this week alone, Public Health Department permanent secretary Dr. Opas Karnkawinpong said Wednesday.

Opas said respiratory problems, dermatitis, eye inflammation and sore throats were among the most common medical issues.

Health officials have urged people to use high-quality N95 anti-pollution masks, close windows and doors, minimize time outside and exercise indoors.

"Today is so smoggy. I cough so much," a Thai Facebook user said.

"I have a sore throat and cough so much. I did a test for COVID but it's not that. Looking at the pollution level, that could be it."

Smoke from forest fires and farmers burning crop stubble have polluted the air in parts of the country, according to experts.

Thailand is home to more than 70 million people and its poor air quality has become a hot button issue ahead of the country's May 14 election, with the incumbent government accused of not doing enough to tackle the problem.

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