

Wildfire smoke has been found to be harmful to certain immune cells in the lungs, with a toxicity four times greater than particulates from other types of pollution. Research has linked airborne pollution such as PM2.5 to obesity. Other studies have suggested that another type of understudied air pollution, airborne microplastics, could also be disrupting the hormones that regulate our metabolism. One major analysis estimated that a fifth of the global burden of type 2 diabetes could be attributed to exposure to PM2.5 pollution. Nonetheless, researchers are increasingly concerned about the effect that air pollution may be having on our brains, as Melissa Hogenboom explains in this feature, where you can learn more about the emerging evidence. It has been linked to impaired judgement, poorer performance in school and even higher levels of crime. Researchers point to prolonged exposure to pollutants such as PM2.5. These are areas also afflicted by other problems that affect health, educational achievement and crime levels. Air pollution and weight gain While the exact mechanism is still debated, it is thought that the inflammation caused by air pollution may also affect the body's metabolism.