AIR QUALITY AND OUR HEALTH

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How do we judge air quality?
- The amount of PM (Particulate Matter) in the air.
- The amount of Nitric Oxides in the air.
- For both of these the lower the percentage in our atmosphere, the better off we are.
- For the world we live in today, both of these are far too high.

Consequences of poor air quality
- Primarily outdoor.
  - Lung cancer.
  - Cardiovascular disease.
  - Some research even explains that breathing in air that is in poor quality is somewhat like inhaling carcinogens, something also known to be in cigarettes.
- Primarily indoor
  - Impairs spatial learning and memory.

Benefits of proficient air quality
- Primarily outdoor
  - Reduced risk of premature deaths.
  - Reduced risk of minor illnesses.
  - Reduced risk of emergency room visits.
- Primarily indoor
  - Easier breathing, allowing for higher exercise threshold.
  - Better nights rest.
  - Eliminates some of our common day allergies.

How can we help keep air quality above par?
- Reduce the production of harmful emissions.
- Cut down on combustion.
- Fortunately reducing one usually helps with the reduction of others.

Map of US air quality over 2001-2006
http://www.nasa.gov/topics/earth/features/health-sapping.html