



# **Be careful around dust from floodwater silt, mud, and soil**

**TN:** There are two logos at the top of the page. On the left is: Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa New Zealand Government. On the right is: Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand.

**Adapted in 2023 by Accessible Formats Service, Blind Low Vision NZ, Auckland.**

## **Be careful around dust from floodwater silt, mud, and soil**

Dust from silt, mud and soil can damage your health. Dust, mud, and soil in the air can get into your lungs and airways. This can damage your lungs.

## **Reduce your exposure at times when there is a lot of dust:**

- Stay indoors, close windows, and if you have air conditioning, make sure it is recirculating indoor air and not bringing air in from outside.
- Don't exercise outdoors.
- Make sure the places you sleep, eat, and relax are dust free.
- Wear the right gear when you are cleaning up (i.e. masks, rubber gloves, boots, and eye protection). See more information in our "Returning home after a flood" fact sheet.

## **If you can't avoid dust:**

- Wear a mask! Properly fitting masks are the best protection, like P2 and N95 masks. However, even surgical masks will still help.
- Children should only wear masks if they are older than 2. If they're younger, do your best to keep them away from dust.
- Make sure masks fit correctly. Straps should go above and below the ears.
- Replace masks when needed so they keep working properly.

- Try to reduce vehicle numbers and speeds on roads with lots of silt. Slowing from 30km/h down to 15km/h will cut dust down by about half.

## **If you can't get rid of silt straight away, then try to:**

- Keep the surface wet.
- Cover the silt to prevent it drying and blowing around.
- Use barriers to protect the silt from the wind.

If you are worried about what dust is doing to your health, **call Healthline 0800 611 116.**

**End of Be careful around dust from floodwater silt, mud, and soil**