



**GOVERNMENT OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES**

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**DOH Advises Residents to Be Cautious
When Saharan Dust is Present**

US Virgin Islands — The VI Department of Health (VIDOH) advises the public to be cautious about spending time outdoors when the Virgin Islands are experiencing clouds of Saharan Dust.

Virgin Islanders can take steps to reduce their risk of developing health concerns while Saharan Dust is present; to include staying indoors or only participating in less strenuous activities. Persons can walk instead of run, which supports calmer breathing. In addition, wearing a mask when outdoors will help to prevent inhaling Dust. Once you enter your home, changing your clothes and taking a shower will remove any irritants from your skin or immediate environment.

Saharan Dust consists of particles of varied sizes that can be harmful to one's health. Larger particles can irritate your eyes, nose and throat while the smaller particles can get into the lungs and create more severe health concerns.

These health concerns can be mild to severe, depending on the individual's health. For instance, persons with asthma or heart disease may experience symptoms that may require medical intervention or medication.

Symptoms of concern can include trouble breathing, wheezing, coughing, chest pain or tightness, fast heartbeat, feeling out of breath or being more tired than usual. If you experience any of these symptoms and they get worst or last for an extended period, do not hesitate to contact your doctor or go to the emergency room.

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