

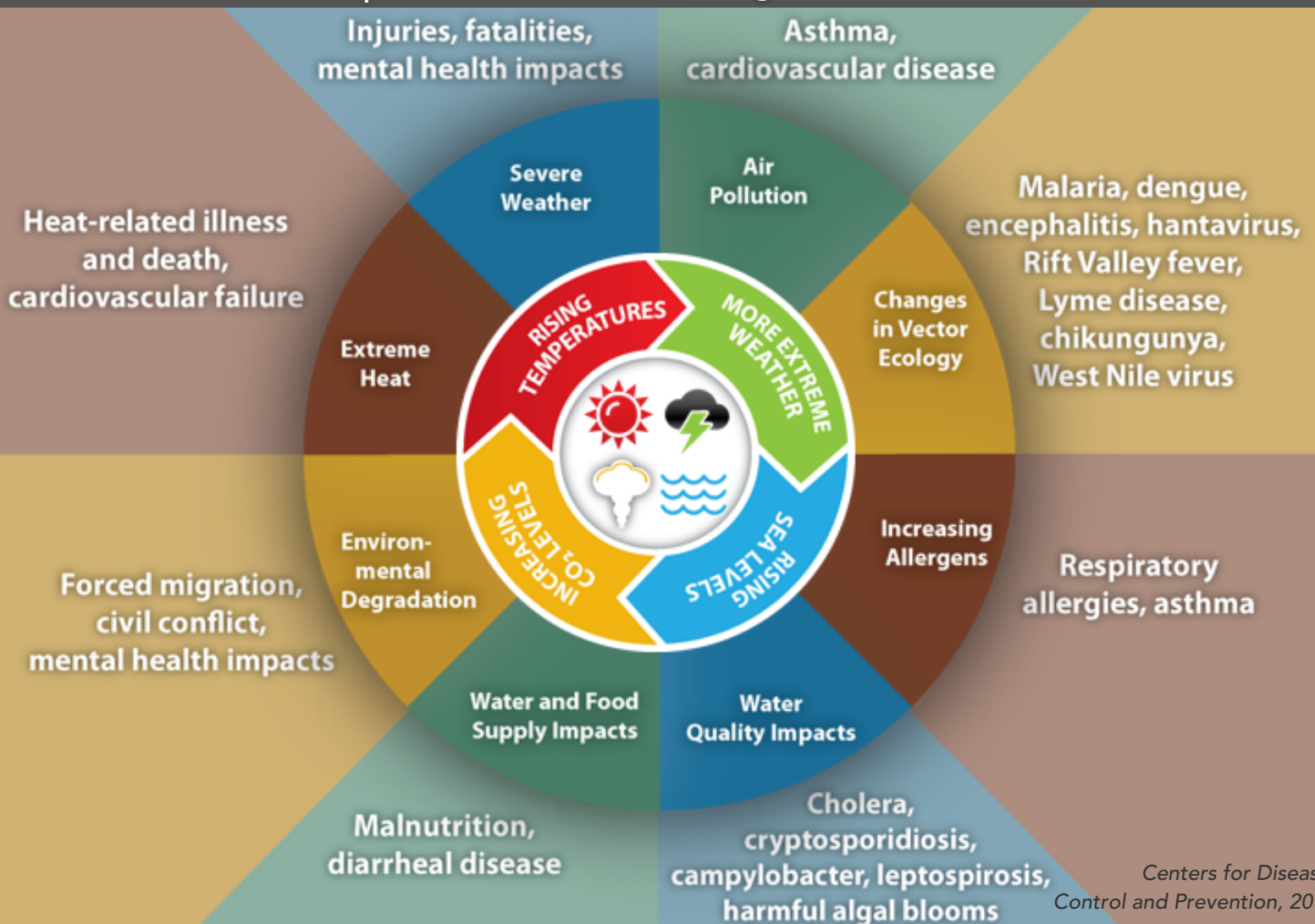
Climate Change Impacts

HEALTH & CLIMATE

- Canada is experiencing and will continue to experience a wide range of climate-induced health risks associated with various hazards including floods, storms, air pollution events, and extreme heat events [1].
- The World Health Organization has characterized climate change as the “single biggest health threat facing humanity” [2].
- Health risks associated with climate change disproportionately impact women, children, ethnic minorities, poor communities, migrants or displaced persons, older populations, and those with underlying health conditions [3].



Global Impact of Climate Change on Human Health



IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON HUMAN HEALTH

- The extent of health risks depends on how quickly the climate changes, the level of Green House Gases (GHGs) emitted into the atmosphere, and how well adaptation measures can address new environmental conditions and impacts on health [1].
- Indirect health risks related to climate change are impacted by factors including food yields, the erosion of cultures, stresses on housing and settlements, evolving patterns of migration and displacement, impacts on economic livelihoods, and the distribution of infectious diseases [1].
 - Some of these climate-related health risks may be short term (e.g., heat illness), some may be long term (e.g., mental health impacts of displacement), and some may be multi-generational or irreversible (e.g., the decline of a culture among Indigenous Peoples) [1].

Impact on Indigenous Peoples

- For Inuit communities in Nunatsiavut, the land is foundational to mental health. As climate change disrupts long-held traditions such as hunting, fishing, and traveling by sea ice to significant cultural areas, strong emotional reactions have included grief, anger, sadness, frustration, and despair [7].
- Climate change may also impact human health in Labrador as traditional country foods become more difficult to obtain for Indigenous Peoples and food security is threatened [8]. Unable to hunt and fish as often or as safely and reliably as previous years because of a changing climate, many people are beginning to rely on more expensive, store-bought, and highly processed foods [9].

Human health on the island of Newfoundland will be impacted by climate change because of its inadequate guarantee of food security, given that the provincial agriculture industry does not secure enough healthy, fresh, nutritious, and affordable food for people to be healthy [10].

WHAT CAN WE DO?

According to the World Health Organization, meeting the goals laid out in the Paris Agreement could save about a million lives a year, globally, by 2050, only factoring in the reductions in air pollution alone [2].



Alternatives to carbon-emitting transportation include active forms of transportation such as cycling or walking which can both reduce carbon emissions and offer major health benefits including reduced risk of many chronic health conditions and improved mental health [2].

More sustainable food production can mitigate climate impacts and support more nutritious diets, with the potential to prevent close to 11 million premature deaths a year [2].



Climate-resilient health systems must be in place to face emerging health threats, including those from climate change [2].

Worldwide biodiversity loss impacts human health and increases risk of emerging infectious diseases. A healthy society relies on healthy ecosystems to provide food security, medicine, fresh water, and clean air [2]. Protecting and promoting biodiversity and healthy ecosystems ultimately protects and supports human health.



The Canadian Medical Association has made climate change a priority by divesting from fossil fuels [14].



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