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**3 MINUTE ORAL PRESENTATION ON THE
ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS OF BURNING COAL**

1. Processing and burning fossil fuels contributes significantly to air pollution which in turn causes health problems, especially in the oldest and youngest, and those with pulmonary disease. As a doctor I have seen these health problems first hand, especially at the VA with its vulnerable population. These health effects are caused both directly by inhaling harmful chemicals and particles and indirectly by upsetting the balance of nature and weather.

2. This discussion is specifically about coal so I will not address other fossil fuels other than to say that they each have their own specific harmful health effects, and these effects are additive. Coal is particularly significant due to the high concentration and wide range of harmful particles and chemicals it produces and the large amount of coal that America uses to generate heat and power.

3. The ideas I am presenting are not just my opinions, they are evidence-based. The world's scientists have been studying the health effects of coal for decades and have accumulated a vast database indicating that the health effects are extremely harmful.

4. For those interested in understanding the scientific evidence, the best publication I have found is titled "Scientific Evidence of Health Effects from Coal Use in Energy Generation", produced by the Health Care Research Collaborative based at the University of Illinois. It is easily located on the Internet. In summary, it documents that the use of coal as an energy source has multiple large-scale serious worldwide health effects including illness and death related to respiratory, cardiac, and neurological diseases, as well as cancers and adverse effects on the developing fetus and pregnancy.

5. In conclusion, the scientific evidence for adverse health effects stemming from using Coal as an energy source is overwhelming. In fairness to the human race and all other living species and the planet itself, it is an urgent medical and ecological imperative to take a more comprehensive approach to our fuel choices and move vigorously towards clean energy sources. Certainly, our own government, tasked with protecting its citizenship and protecting its environment, should take a lead role in safe energy development.

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June 23, 2016

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