

## Passive Smoking – Second Hand Smoke

When people smoke cigarettes, there are four ways that others can be harmed by **"passive" or "second hand" smoking**:

1. By inhaling smoke exhaled by a smoker (second hand smoke).
2. By inhaling smoke that rises from the end of a lit cigarette (side stream smoke).
3. By being born to a mother who smoked during pregnancy.
4. By drinking breast milk from a mother who smokes.

### ***Why are secondhand smoke and side stream smoke harmful?***

Smoke from a cigarette, pipe, or cigar has almost 4,000 chemicals in it. Two hundred of these chemicals are poisons, and 43 have been proven to cause cancer. Children exposed to indoor smoke have more accidents, more emergency room visits, and more hospital admissions. The following conditions are made worse by passive smoke:

Wheezing, asthma attacks	Colds, flu
Pneumonia, bronchitis, croup	Ear infections
Coughs, sore throats, tonsillitis	Sinus infections
Eye irritation	Snoring
Learning problems in school	Crib death (SIDS)
Some types of meningitis	Growth problems
Hyperactivity, behavior problems	Risk for lung cancer later in life

### ***How does cigarette smoke affect the body?***

Cigarette smoke contains dangerous chemicals. These chemicals increase the risk for several kinds of cancer, heart disease, and chronic respiratory disease. Carbon monoxide starves your blood of oxygen and increases the work of the heart. Nicotine increases blood pressure and heart rate. Tar builds up in lung tissue and contains cancer causing substances.

### ***How does passive smoke affect people with asthma?***

Exposure to second hand smoke increases the amount and severity of asthma attacks. Lots of exposure to second hand smoke may be associated with 8,000 to 26,000 new cases of asthma each year in children who would not become asthmatic.

### ***What happens if my child is exposed to passive smoke while he has a cold or upper respiratory infection?***

It is a proven fact that children who are exposed to passive smoke during and after an upper respiratory infection are more likely to have a worse case or even have to be hospitalized. Smoking around a child can cause damage to his respiratory tract. The child is at greater risk for developing a lower respiratory tract disease, such as pneumonia.

### ***What happens if a pregnant woman smokes?***

Smoking during pregnancy causes problems for the baby while it is inside the mother and after it is born. These problems include: smaller babies; higher risk for abortion; miscarriage; premature birth or stillbirth; problems with behavior and learning; more middle ear and respiratory infections; more hospital admissions; and more infant deaths.

### ***What happens if a nursing mother smokes?***

These children are at the most risk. Besides the secondhand smoke and side stream smoke in the room, they are exposed to tobacco chemicals in the mother's breast milk. The milk supply of a mother who smokes may not be adequate for the growth of her baby because nicotine decreases milk supply.

### ***How can I protect my child from passive smoke?***

- Don't smoke in your house or around your child.
- Don't allow anyone else to smoke in your house or around your child.
- Don't leave your child with someone who smokes.
- Don't hold your child while you are smoking.
- Your baby will get fewer chemicals in the breast milk if you smoke after you have nursed your baby.
- Use signs and stickers to ask smokers to refrain from smoking around you.
- Encourage your smoking family and friends to quit.
- Don't put out ashtrays on your home. Air and smoke will move all through your house, so smoking in another room still exposes your child to secondhand smoke.

### ***How can I stop smoking?***

Ask your doctor for help, or take a stop-smoking class from the American Lung Association, the American Heart Association, or the American Cancer Society. If your spouse is a smoker, help him or her to quit.

### ***How can I impact my community to stop smoking?***

- Encourage family and friends to talk to their doctors about ways to stop smoking.
- Use restaurants that have designated nonsmoking areas.
- If someone near you lights up a cigarette, it isn't wrong to ask them to extinguish it. "Could I ask you not to smoke?" is all that's needed.
- When you travel, request nonsmoking rooms.
- Become active in working for and supporting legislation that restricts smoking.

### ***Other words of caution:***

- Don't leave ash trays with cigarette butts lying around the house. Nicotine in butts is poisonous to small children and pets.
- Don't leave a lit cigarette, pipe, or cigar unattended.
- Don't leave cigarette lighters or matches lying around the house. Children start fires by playing with them.

The Surgeon General's report on smoking and health in 1964 concluded that smoking was harmful to one's health. In 1990, the Surgeon General's report concluded that stopping was beneficial to all smokers, no matter what age or condition of health.