



SMOKE-free

Get help kicking the tobacco habit

The Dangers of Secondhand Smoke

What is secondhand smoke?

Secondhand smoke is the smoke that escapes from the end of a lit cigarette. It also comes from cigars or pipes. It also is the smoke that is blown out of the mouth by the smoker. This smoke has harmful chemicals. It can affect everyone around the smoker.

Is secondhand smoke dangerous?

Yes! Tobacco smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals. At least 250 of these chemicals are harmful. Secondhand smoke can cause breathing problems like coughing or asthma. It can cause lung infections and heart disease. Nonsmokers who live with smokers have an increased chance of getting lung cancer. Secondhand smoke is connected to breast cancer, brain tumors, leukemia and other cancers. Thousands of people die each year because of secondhand smoke.

Is it dangerous to smoke around children?

Yes! Secondhand smoke causes lung infections, ear infections and asthma attacks in babies and children. Pregnant women who are around secondhand smoke may have low birth-weight babies. Secondhand smoke causes premature death in children.

How much exposure is too much?

There is NO safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Any exposure is too much.

What can I do to protect my family against secondhand smoke?

The best thing you can do is to make your home and car free of smoke. Opening windows, running fans or using air filters is not enough to prevent the effects of secondhand smoke.

Sources:

American Cancer Society. *Secondhand Smoke*. <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/tobaccocancer/secondhand-smoke>. Accessed August 2, 2011.

National Cancer Institute. *Secondhand Smoke and Cancer*. <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Tobacco/ETS>. Accessed August 2, 2011.



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