

This is a
Non - Smoking
Building



Secondhand smoke is a mixture of the smoke given off by the burning end of a

cigarette, pipe, or cigar and the smoke exhaled from the lungs of smokers. Tobacco smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, 200 of which are known poisons, and more than 50 known cancer-causing agents. There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Smoking-related diseases claim an estimated 430,700 American lives each year.

Health effects in adults

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that secondhand smoke is responsible for about 3,000 lung cancer deaths each year among nonsmokers in the U.S.; of these, the estimate is 800 from exposure to secondhand smoke at home and 2,200 from exposure in work or social situations.
- Secondhand smoke is also a confirmed cause of nasal sinus cancer in nonsmokers.
- Along with cancers, secondhand smoke causes between 35,000 and 62,000 coronary heart disease deaths each year. Atherosclerosis, which is the hardening of the arteries, is a leading cause of death in the United States. Nonsmokers that regularly are exposed to secondhand smoke increase their chances of atherosclerosis by 20%.
- Eye, nose, and throat irritation and headaches are also more pronounced in adults exposed to secondhand smoke.

Health effects in infants and children

- More than 15 million American children and adolescents are exposed to secondhand smoke in their homes every year.

- Exposure to secondhand smoke causes an estimated 1,868 to 2,708 deaths every year in the United States due to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Additionally, researchers estimate that secondhand smoke aggravates the asthma of 200,000 to 1,000,000 asthmatic children every year.
- In the first two years of life, babies of parents who smoke at home have a much higher rate of lung diseases such as bronchitis and pneumonia.
- A very critical observation is that children of parents who smoke have a slower rate of growth in lung function as the lungs mature.
- It has been suggested that this may lead to increased susceptibility to developing lung disease in adult life.
- EPA estimates that passive smoking is responsible for between 150,000 to 300,000 lower respiratory tract infections such as bronchitis, pneumonia and ear infections in infants and children less than 18 months of age annually, resulting in between 7,500 and 15,000 hospitalizations each year.

Steps to reduce exposure

- Do not smoke while you are pregnant.
- Make your home a smoke-free zone. Remove ashtrays from your home and place signs in your home asking people not to smoke.
- Protect your children. Let caregivers and babysitters know that you do not allow smoking in your home or around your children.
- Support those who decide to quit smoking.
- Do not allow smoking in your car.
- Patronize smoke-free restaurants. Do not let your teens work in restaurants or workplaces where smoking is permitted.

For further information:

- American Lung Association® of the Upper Midwest Health House®: www.HealthHouse.org
- American Lung Association: www.LungUSA.org
- Environmental Protection Agency: www.EPA.gov/iaq
- Americans for Non-smokers' Rights: www.no-smoke.org
- Local Department of Health

These tips are brought to you by the American Lung Association® of the Upper Midwest Health House® program. For more information on creating a healthier home environment, visit our website at www.HealthHouse.org.

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