

Protect Your Children from Cigarette Smoke



Secondhand smoke is a mix of the smoke from a cigarette and the smoke breathed out by a smoker. A person who has never smoked before can still get serious health problems from being around this smoke. Secondhand smoke has many harmful poisons that can cause diseases like asthma, heart disease and cancer.

Secondhand Smoke Especially Harms Children

Secondhand smoke harms children even more than adults. Children's bodies are still growing, so the smoke can hurt their organs (like the heart and lungs) as they develop. Being around this smoke makes it more likely for children to get:

- Lung and breathing issues (especially in children under 6 years old)
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in babies
- Ear problems
- Asthma

If your child already has asthma, secondhand smoke can make the symptoms worse. It can make your child wheeze or cough more and have more asthma attacks.

Protect Your Children from Secondhand Smoke

If you choose to smoke at home, there are ways to protect your children from the smoke:

- Do not smoke anywhere near your children.
- Only smoke in one room with open windows.
- Use an air filter in the house.

Prevent Third-Hand Smoke, Too

Cigarette smoke and its chemicals will stick around even after you stop smoking. This leftover smoke is called third-hand smoke. It stays in your hair, skin, clothes, carpet, walls, and furniture for months or longer. This type of smoke cannot be removed by airing out a room or even cleaning. Children and adults can be put at risk for health problems just by breathing near or touching surfaces with third-hand smoke.

Even if you smoke while your children are out of the room, third-hand smoke can harm your children. To further protect your children from cigarette smoke:

- Choose not to smoke in your home or car.
- Take a shower or change your clothes after you smoke. Do this before touching or going near your child.

The best plan is to quit smoking.

Talk to your doctor for help to quit smoking. For more information or for free help quitting, call 311 or the Asian Smokers' Quitline at **1-800-838-8917**.



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