



The Smoke Around You

Secondhand Smoke in the Workplace, Public Places, and at Home

Secondhand smoke includes the smoke exhaled by a person who smokes and from the lighted end of any tobacco product. It contains nicotine and the same harmful things inhaled by people who smoke.

Secondhand smoke causes lung cancer and may increase the risk of cancers of the head, neck, and breast. Children exposed to secondhand smoke may also have an increased risk of cancer. And secondhand smoke increases the risk of having a heart attack or a stroke.

There is no safe amount of exposure to secondhand smoke. Any amount is harmful.

What can you do?

The best way to protect everyone from secondhand smoke is to not allow any smoking indoors. Opening a window, filtering the air, or keeping people who smoke away from others does not remove the risks of secondhand smoke.

In the workplace

Smoke-free rules are the best way to get rid of secondhand smoke at work. Smoke-free workplaces may also inspire people to smoke less or even quit. You can help by:

- Checking for state and local smoke-free laws where you live
- Urging your workplace to become smoke free, if it's not already

- Asking your elected officials to support strong laws to protect workers from secondhand smoke

In public places

Support businesses that are smoke-free. Studies show that going smoke-free does not harm business.

- Choose smoke-free restaurants and businesses. Let owners of businesses that allow smoking know that secondhand smoke is harmful to your family's health.
- Avoid public places that allow smoking both indoors and outside.
- Stay in smoke-free rooms and rent smoke-free cars when you travel.

In your home

Making your home smoke free is vital to the health of your family. Anyone can develop health problems from secondhand smoke, even your pets. Here are some steps you can take:

- If you smoke, stop.
- If others in your home smoke, help them stop.
- Do not allow anyone to smoke in your home or in your car.

What about children?

Young children are most affected by secondhand smoke and are the least able to avoid it. Most exposure comes from adults smoking in their home. Studies show that children who live with people who smoke:

- Get sick more often
- Have more lung infections (like bronchitis and pneumonia)
- Are more likely to cough, wheeze, and have shortness of breath
- Get more ear infections
- Are more at risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

Secondhand smoke can also trigger asthma attacks or make asthma symptoms worse.



To learn more about quitting smoking, visit the American Cancer Society website at **cancer.org/howtoquit** or call us at **1-800-227-2345**. We're here when you need us.

What can parents do?

You can protect your children's health by limiting the amount of secondhand smoke they are exposed to.

- Don't smoke or let anyone else smoke in your house or car.
- Don't allow babysitters or childcare workers to smoke around your children.
- Teach your children to stay away from secondhand smoke.
- Don't take your children to public places that allow smoking.
- Work with your local community to teach children and parents about the dangers of secondhand smoke.

What about secondhand aerosol (vapor) from e-cigarettes (vapes)?

Secondhand vapor from e-cigarettes can expose other people to nicotine and harmful chemicals. Smoke- and tobacco-free policies should also cover e-cigarettes. This will help non-users avoid being exposed to possibly harmful e-cigarette vapor.



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