

SECOND-HAND SMOKE EXPOSURE IN PETS

Second-hand smoke also affects the health of household pets. Their fur coat traps the smoke particles which the animals then absorb when they groom themselves. Second-hand smoke may cause leukemia in cats and increases the risk of cancer in dogs.

SECOND-HAND SMOKE IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Tobacco smoke is the main source of indoor pollution and the easiest to eliminate completely—simply forbid anyone from smoking in the house.

Opening a window, smoking in an-other room, or using air purifiers or ventilation systems offers no protection against second-hand smoke.

After the cigarette is extinguished, the second-hand smoke remains in the environment. It settles on food, clothing skin, carpets, curtains in the air etc., and re-mains there for days and even weeks.

Ways to eliminate second-hand smoke include:

- No smoking inside
- Creation of closed smoking rooms with in-dependent ventilation
- Smoking cessation programs for those who want to quit
- Public education exposing the hazards of second-hand smoke

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SECOND HAND SMOKE

What you need to know



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WHAT IS SECOND-HAND SMOKE?

Second-hand smoke (SHS), also called environmental tobacco smoke (ETS - the term preferred by the tobacco industry), is considered highly toxic. It refers to both smoke from a cigarette (side stream smoke) and smoke exhaled by a smoker (mainstream smoke). Other sources include smoke from pipe, cigar or marijuana.

Two-thirds of the smoke produced by tobacco spreads into the ambient air. Anyone within close range of an active smoker cannot help but breathe in this tobacco smoke, and therefore becomes a **passive smoker**.

CHEMICALS IN SECOND-HAND SMOKE

The chemicals found in second-hand smoke **are the same** as those inhaled by the active smoker.

Some contents of second-hand smoke include:

- **Carbon monoxide**, an asphyxiating gas that reduces tissue oxygenation
- **Formaldehyde**, a carcinogenic, irritant gas used as a disinfectant
- **Benzene**, a highly toxic and irritant flammable liquid
- **Nicotine**, a substance producing an addictive effect and also used in the manufacturing of insecticides
- **Ammonia**, a compound used in the manufacturing of explosives, fertilizers and paint solvents

- **Arsenic**, an agent producing a highly carcinogenic effect on the skin and on the lungs

- **Hydrocyanic acid**, a violent poison that is extremely harmful to the lungs

Second-hand smoke contains approximately **4,000 chemicals, including 50 carcinogenic agents**

SECOND-HAND SMOKE EXPOSURE

Once inhaled, smoke causes the release of the many different chemicals in one's body, disrupting the mechanism in the lungs that would normally protect it from injury brought about by tobacco smoke. As a result, second-hand smokers experience nasal congestion, have inflamed airways and tend to cough a lot. Second-hand smoke is also known to damage the walls of the air sacs (alveoli), which eventually impairs the ability of the lungs to supply oxygen to the blood.

There is no safe threshold for second-hand smoke exposure.

Short term second-hand smoke exposure may cause relatively minor problems like:

- Irritating the eyes, nose and throat
- Causing headaches, dizziness and nausea
- Causing physical reactions that have been linked to heart attack and stroke such as increased heart rate, decreased oxygen supply to the heart and constriction of blood vessels—which increases blood pressure and makes the heart work harder.

Long-term exposure can:

- Aggravate the symptoms and speed up the progression of lung disease
- Reduce the level of protective cholesterol (good cholesterol) in the blood
- Increase the risk of respiratory infections such as a cold, flu, bronchitis (acute bronchitis), and pneumonia
- Cause Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Increase the risk of lung cancer and has been linked to cancer of the blood (leukemia), breast, cervix, thyroid, and lymph glands. More recent studies have also linked second-hand smoke to nasal sinus cancer

SECOND-HAND SMOKE EXPOSURE IN BABIES/CHILDREN

Second-hand smoke is especially harmful to young children who, because they breathe faster than adults, are prone to inhale more smoke relative to their size. In Canada, second-hand smoke affects hundreds of thousands of children under the age of five.

In nursing infants and children of parents who smoke, second-hand smoke produces the following effects:

- Doubles the risk of SIDS (crib death)
- Exacerbates inflammatory bowel disease
- Increases the risk of otitis, ear infections, and respiratory tract disorders such as: bronchiolitis, pneumonia, tonsillitis, and asthma