

Second-hand Smoke

Second-hand smoke is what you breathe in when you are around a smoker. It is what the smoker breathes out and the smoke that comes from the burning end of a cigarette, cigar or pipe. It contains more than 4,000 chemicals. There is no safe level of exposure. Any exposure is harmful!

What is in Smoke?

- Carcinogens are chemicals that cause cancer. In second-hand smoke there are at least 69 chemicals known to cause cancer.
- Irritants are chemicals that cause soreness and rawness of the nose and lungs.
- Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas

Children who spend one hour in a very smoky room inhale enough toxic chemicals to equal smoking 10 cigarettes.

How Second-hand Smoke Affects a Child

Smoke contains many irritants and poisons. It is especially dangerous for babies and young children. Their lungs are delicate. Not only is a child's body developing physically, but his or her breathing rate is faster than an adult's. Adults breathe in and out about 14 to 18 times a minute. But newborns can breathe as fast as 60 times a minute. When their air is tainted with cigarette smoke when children are young, their developing lungs receive a higher concentration of inhaled toxins. Babies can't move to another room because the air is smoky. They depend on us to provide them with clean air to breathe.

Some Risks of Second-hand Smoke

- **SIDS** (sudden infant death syndrome or crib death) occurs four times more often in smoke-exposed babies than in babies who have a smoke-free environment.
- **Pneumonia and bronchitis** occur four times more often.
- **Respiratory infections** (numbers of colds and sinus infections) increase.
- Smoke makes **asthma** worse and can cause more asthmatic episodes.
- **Ear infections** are made worse because smoke irritates the inner ear tube (Eustachian tube). It causes swelling, leading to infections. Ear infections are the most common cause of hearing loss in children.

What You Can Do

- If you or your partner smokes, stop. If you have trouble quitting, ask your doctor for help.
- Do not let anyone smoke in your home. Smoke stays in the upholstery, carpets and curtains and can continue to irritate your child.
- If people must smoke, ask them to do it outside.
- Never smoke in the car with your baby.
- Avoid homes, restaurants, and other places where people smoke.
- If other people care for your baby, make sure they do not smoke.
- **Wash your hands after smoking.**
- **Wear a covering over your clothing when you smoke even outside, since smoke sticks to clothes. Take off this covering before returning inside.**

What Happens When You Stop Smoking

Nicotine withdrawal occurs when the nervous system reacts to the lack of nicotine in the blood. Nicotine is a very addictive drug. Some say it is more addictive than heroin.

During withdrawal you may have:

- A strong urge to smoke
- Frequent thoughts about cigarettes and smoking
- Short temper
- Nervousness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Restlessness

How to Quit

1. List your reasons for quitting. For example:
 - Live longer
 - Decrease coughing
 - Save money
 - Provide clean air for the people around me
2. Set a “quit” date and mark it on your calendar. Pick a day that has special meaning if possible.
3. Talk to your physician or healthcare provider about nicotine replacement therapy and smoking cessation medication options.

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How to Quit, continued

4. Ask someone else who smokes to quit with you so that you can help each other.
5. If any of your friends has quit smoking, ask them for help and support.
6. Each day deposit money not spent on cigarettes in a clear bank, and watch your savings grow. Plan a reward for yourself.
7. Each day try to smoke less as you get closer to your quit date. Make the time between each cigarette longer and longer.
8. When your “quit day” comes, throw away your cigarettes, lighters, and ashtrays. Ask your family and friends to please not smoke around you.
9. Take one day at a time. Each morning tell yourself, “I will not smoke today.”

How to Handle Nicotine Withdrawal

The symptoms of withdrawal from nicotine are worst the first 3 to 7 days after quitting. After that, the physical symptoms fade and are gone by 2 weeks. During withdrawal, you may be moody and nervous. You may sweat and have cravings for sweets. You may also have trouble sleeping or concentrating.

- Adjust your attitude. Decide from the start that smoking is not an option.
- Understand smoking urges. Remember that urges to smoke are brief, and the urge will fade in time.
- Learn to relax. Take several slow, deep breaths. Focus on the air moving easily in and out of your body.
- Imagine yourself in a favorite place where you are content and comfortable. *Continue breathing easily. While you relax, let the image be as vivid as possible.* When you “return,” you will find the urge to smoke has been replaced by a sense of calm.

Cigarette Substitutes

- Keep hands and mouth busy.
- Chew on sugar free candy and mints.
- Chew on fruit and vegetable sticks.
- Drink lots of water and juices.
- Chew on toothpicks.
- Find hobbies or crafts to work on.
- Take up exercising, such as walking after lunch and dinner.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy and Smoking Cessation Medications That Can Help

Nicotine Replacement Therapy Options:

- Gum
- Skin patch
- Lozenges
- Smoking Cessation Medications (prescription required):
 - Bupropion (brand name, Zyban[®]).
 - Varenicline (brand name, Chantix[®])
- Inhalers (prescription required)
- Nasal spray

What if I “Slip”?

Don’t give up just because you have one cigarette! Having a “slip” can happen to anyone. Keep trying. Most successful quitters have tried to quit 3 or 4 times before. You can do it!

Please ask your child’s nurse or respiratory therapist for a copy of the Stop Smoking Programs Helping Hand.