



Secondhand Smoke

Secondhand 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.
- Oxidants cause heart and blood vessel damage.

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

How Secondhand 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 young children breathe smoke-filled air, their developing lungs receive a higher concentration of inhaled toxins. Babies cannot move to another room because the air is smoky. They depend on us to provide them with clean air to breathe.

Some Risks of Secondhand 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 bronchiolitis** 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 middle ear tube (Eustachian tube). It causes swelling, leading to infections. Ear infections are the most common cause of hearing loss in children.

Problems if you Smoke During Pregnancy

If you smoke during pregnancy, you are putting yourself and your baby at risk for health problems. Smokers also have a greater chance of having a miscarriage and a higher chance of stillbirth (having a baby born dead).

Risks to your baby

- **Less food and oxygen to baby:** When the mother is smoking, it narrows the blood vessels that carry food and oxygen to her baby.
- **Decreases the amount of oxygen in the blood:** This can affect the normal growth of the baby.
- **Lower birth weight:** The unborn baby of a smoker may not grow as much as it should. The baby may never catch up in size.
- **Premature birth:** The baby of a smoker may be born too soon. This can pose serious health risks to the baby, including death.
- **Heart and Lung Problems:** A mother's smoking raises her baby's heart rate, which can make the baby's heart work too hard. It may increase the baby's risk of heart disease and asthmatic problems. Smoking during pregnancy leads to smaller lungs in the baby.
- **Sudden Unexplained Infant Deaths:** A mother's smoking during pregnancy increases her baby's risk of a sudden unexplained death during sleep. These deaths have been called SIDS and crib death.
- **Learning and Behavior Problems:** When a mother smokes during pregnancy her child may be more likely to have problems in school. The child may have problems with learning, hyperactivity, and paying attention.

- **Placenta Can Separate from Womb:** This causes the baby to lose oxygen and nutrients. It increases the risk of growth problems.
- **Water Can Break Too Early:** This can lead to infection, pre-term labor and be deadly to both mother and baby.
- **Certain birth defects, such as:** cleft lip and palate, club foot, gastroschisis (a birth defect of the abdominal (belly wall), heart defects, cryptorchidism (the failure of one or both testes to lower into the scrotum).

It is never too late to quit smoking.

It is best to quit before you become pregnant. If you are already pregnant, quitting by the third or fourth month is best for your baby's health. **Quitting smoking also improves your health.** Your child will need your love and care for many years. Quitting smoking will make for a healthier lifestyle and environment. Quitting smoking can also give you more energy. You will need all you can get!

What You Can Do

- If you or your partner smokes, stop. If you have trouble quitting, ask your doctor for help. To get started, contact the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line (1-800-Quitnow, or 1-800-784-8669)
- Do not let anyone smoke in your home. Smoke stays in the upholstery, carpets and curtains and can continue to irritate your child. This is called third-hand smoke.
- 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.

Stop Smoking Programs

Ohio Tobacco Quit Line

- Offers free counseling to uninsured, Medicaid recipients, pregnant women and members of the Ohio Tobacco Collaborative.
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy may be available to those who qualify.
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8339) to learn more and to enroll.
- Text to quit smoking: text the word “QUIT” (7848) to “IQUIT” (47848) to receive tailored smoking cessation advice via Text Message.

Baby and Me Tobacco Free:

- Free smoking cessation sessions: Take part in four sessions designed to help pregnant women with strategies to quit.
- Free Diapers: Receive a monthly voucher for free diapers for up to 12 months when you stay smoke free after your baby is born.
- Columbus Public Health at 614-645-2135

Smoke-free Teen:

- For teens taking control of their health
- Go to <http://teen.smokefree.gov>.

American Cancer Society®

- Go to <http://www.cancer.org/Healthy/StayAwayfromTobacco/index>.
- Call the Help Line at 1-800-227-2345, Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-7:30 p.m. EST.

The National Cancer Institute and other government agencies

- An online smoking cessation program tailored to your needs along with a downloadable app and chat line.
- Go to <http://www.smokefree.gov> to learn more about this website