

# *Children and Secondhand Smoke*

## ***Just what is secondhand smoke?***

Secondhand smoke is a mixture of the smoke given off by the burning end of a cigarette, pipe or cigar, and the smoke that is exhaled from the lungs of the smoker.

Second hand smoke is also called environmental tobacco smoke; exposure to secondhand smoke is often called involuntary smoking or passive smoking. Children, especially infants and toddlers, are particularly susceptible to the effects of passive smokers.

## ***Why should parents be concerned about secondhand smoke?***

### **Effect on lungs . . .**

Children who breathe secondhand smoke are more likely to suffer from pneumonia, bronchitis, and other lung diseases.

### **Ear Infections . . .**

Children who breathe secondhand smoke can have more ear infections.

### **Asthma . . .**

Children who breathe secondhand smoke can have more asthma attacks and the episodes can be more severe.

Secondhand smoke may also cause thousands of healthy children to develop asthma each year. Infants and very young children who breathe secondhand smoke are more likely to get lung infections, resulting in thousands of hospitalizations each year.

## ***What can I do to reduce children's health risks from secondhand smoke?***

### **In your home . . .**

Choose not to smoke in your home and don't permit others to do so.

Choose not to smoke if children are present, especially infants and toddlers. They are particularly susceptible to the effects of passive smoke.

Don't allow baby-sitters or others who work in your home to smoke in the house or near your children.



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