

# SECONDHAND SMOKE

## Is Secondhand Smoke a Killer?

- Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke are 30% more likely to die of lung cancer and heart disease over time.
- Each year secondhand smoke kills an estimated 3,000 adult nonsmokers from lung cancer.

## What's in Secondhand Smoke?

- Secondhand smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals.
- 43 of the chemicals cause cancer
- Some cancer causing chemicals and their common usage include:

**Arsenic** ..... used as ant poison

**Hydroxide** ..... used for rocket fuel

**Formaldehyde** ..... used to preserve lab specimens

**Tar** ..... used to make asphalt

**Cadmium** ..... used in car batteries

## How Does Secondhand Smoke Affect Children?

- Children of smokers have an increased risk of developing serious lung problems such as asthma, bronchitis and pneumonia. They also suffer from more coughs and middle ear infections.
- Children of smokers are three times more likely to spend time in the hospital for bronchitis and pneumonia than children of nonsmokers.

- Children who grow up watching their parents smoke are likely to smoke themselves. They are also more likely to develop lung cancer as adults.

## Is Secondhand Smoke a Health Hazard?

- Secondhand smoke causes many health problems such as burning eyes, throat irritations, hoarseness, sneezing, headache and nausea.
- Secondhand smoke causes other respiratory problems in nonsmokers including coughing, phlegm, chest discomfort and reduced lung function.
- Nonsmokers exposed to cigarette smoke have high levels of nicotine and carbon monoxide in their blood.

## What Can You Do?

- Ask visitors not to smoke in your house or car.
- Ask to be seated in nonsmoking areas of restaurants and public transportation.
- Ask others who smoke around you to go outside.
- Encourage those who smoke to quit.



Department of Health & Human Services

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