



Secondhand Smoke

What is secondhand smoke?

Secondhand smoke is also known as environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) and/or side stream smoke.

Cigarettes will burn for approximately 12 minutes. During that time, the smoker inhales for approximately 30 seconds. The smoke that continues to drift into the air while the smoker is not inhaling is what's commonly called secondhand smoke. The smoke inhaled by the smoker first, and then exhaled, is called mainstream smoke.

Second-hand smoke contains tar, carbon monoxide and thousands of toxic chemicals.

Why be concerned?

Cigarette smoke is powerful asthma trigger and exposure will increase the number and severity of asthma episodes.

Second-hand cigarette smoke exposure can lead to:

- Worsening asthma symptoms
- Increased use of asthma medication.
- Children having more:
 - Colds
 - Sore throats
 - Lung conditions (e.g., bronchitis, bronchiolitis, pneumonia, asthma).
 - Ear infections.
 - Sinus infections

Second-hand smoke may change the function and structure of a child's lungs as the child grows.

Avoidance tips:

- ✓ **Declare your home smoke-free.** Do not allow smoking anywhere in the home. Smoking in another part of the house with the window open is not enough. Toxic chemicals circulate through the ventilation system to other areas in the house.
- ✓ If you smoke, talk to your doctor about quitting and how to get help.
- ✓ If you can not quit smoking, smoke outside.
- ✓ Keep your car smoke-free

For More Information

Visit Health Canada's excellent Go Smoke Free! (link to <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-sesc/tobacco>) Web site or contact the Asthma Society of Canada at 1-866-787-4050 or www.Asthma.ca.