

## If You Don't Smoke

No one, adult or child, should have to breathe someone else's smoke:

- Don't allow smoking in your home or car, particularly if pregnant women, infants, young children or people with health and breathing problems are present. This includes family members, visitors, baby-sitters and others who work in your home.
- Ensure that children learn and play in smoke-free environments. The New York State Clean Indoor Air Act bans smoking and New York Education Law bans all tobacco use (including pipes, cigars, snuff and chewing tobacco) on the grounds of all public and private pre-schools, nursery schools, elementary schools and secondary schools. **Smoke-free laws help send the message that smoking in places where families and children gather is unacceptable.** Work with parent/teacher associations, school boards and administrators to support these laws.

## If You Smoke

There is help for you to quit. When you talk to your health care provider and use quit smoking medications, you can double your chances of quitting. Until you quit, protect the people around you:

- Don't smoke around pregnant women, infants and young children or people with breathing problems.
- Keep your home smoke-free. Go outside to smoke.
- Don't smoke in a car if there are others with you.

## Try to Quit

Smoking is an addiction. For help quitting, talk to your health care provider. Did you know that when your health care provider offers you medication and counseling you double your chances of being smoke-free? You can also get more help by calling the New York State Smokers' Quitline at **1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487)**. It's a free and confidential service to help you become smoke-free.



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Department  
of Health

# Secondhand Smoke Kills

**There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Approximately 2.5 million nonsmokers have died from health problems caused by secondhand smoke since 1964. Secondhand smoke causes numerous health problems in infants and children, including severe asthma attacks, respiratory infections, ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Some of the health conditions caused by secondhand smoke in adults include heart disease, stroke and lung cancer.**

Secondhand smoke is a mixture of gases and fine particles that includes:

- Smoke from a burning cigarette, cigar, or pipe
- Smoke that has been exhaled by people smoking
- More than 7,000 chemicals, including hundreds that are toxic and at least 70 that can cause cancer.

Most exposure to secondhand smoke occurs in homes and automobiles. Secondhand smoke exposure also continues to occur in public places such as building entryways, parks and beaches.

E-cigarettes also create secondhand smoke and should be used with caution as there is little research on their health effects.

E-cigarettes are almost entirely unregulated, are not a Federal Drug Administration (FDA)-approved smoking cessation device- and early evidence indicates they may serve as a gateway to cigarettes for young people.



### Health Effects: Children

In children, secondhand smoke is especially harmful; it causes:

- Ear infections
- More frequent and severe asthma attacks
- Respiratory symptoms (e.g., coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath)
- Respiratory infections (bronchitis and pneumonia)
- A greater risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

In the U.S. among children aged 18 months or younger, secondhand smoke exposure is responsible for an estimated:

- 150,000-300,000 new cases of bronchitis and pneumonia each year
- 7,500-15,000 hospitalizations annually
- More than 400 SIDS deaths annually

### Health Effects: Adults

In adults who have never smoked, secondhand smoke can cause heart disease, stroke and lung cancer. Secondhand smoke also causes breathing problems and may cause diseases in other parts of the body.

#### HEART DISEASE

- For nonsmokers, breathing secondhand smoke has immediate harmful effects on the cardiovascular system that can increase the risk for heart attack. People who already have heart disease are at especially high risk.
- Secondhand smoke exposure causes an estimated 34,000 heart disease deaths annually among adult nonsmokers in the United States.

#### STROKE

- For nonsmokers, breathing secondhand smoke increases the risk for stroke.

#### LUNG CANCER

- Secondhand smoke exposure causes an estimated 7,300 lung cancer deaths annually among adult nonsmokers in the United States.

**There is no safe level of contact with secondhand smoke; even brief exposure can be harmful to health.**