



SECOND-HAND SMOKING

the underestimated cancer risk factor

by Michaela Popelkova

It's not a secret that smoking is a significant risk factor causing cancer. Cigarettes, waterpipes and e-cigarettes all increase the cancer burden. If you are talking with patients who are smokers about cessation possibilities, they often

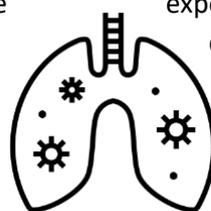


refuse saying that it's only *their* health. However, that's not necessarily true. Smoking can also affect non-smokers. Second-hand smoking, passive smoking, involuntary smoking – all these terms describe tobacco smoke pollution or environmental tobacco smoke emitted from the burning end of smoked tobacco products. It is proven that inhalation of second-hand smoke by non-smokers causes premature death and several diseases. So, smoking cessation is not

only in the active smoker's best interest.

Whose choice to inhale smoke?

It is proven that non-smoking adults who were exposed to second-hand smoke had immediate harmful effects on their heart and blood vessels. This can cause coronary heart disease or stroke in the future. Besides the coronary heart disease relates to second-hand smoking too. The come from from smokers. Passive smokers inhale and such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, nitrosamines, as well as the active smokers. The difference is that second-hand smokers are usually breathing smoke non-voluntarily. Everybody should have the possibility to control their own health by breathing smoke-free air.



exposed to second-hand smoke had immediate harmful can cause coronary heart disease or stroke in the and respiratory issues, such as asthma, lung cancer second-hand smoke contains carcinogens, which the combustion of tobacco and are breathed out metabolize similar chemicals and carcinogens, benzene, cadmium, or tobacco-specific



Pregnant women

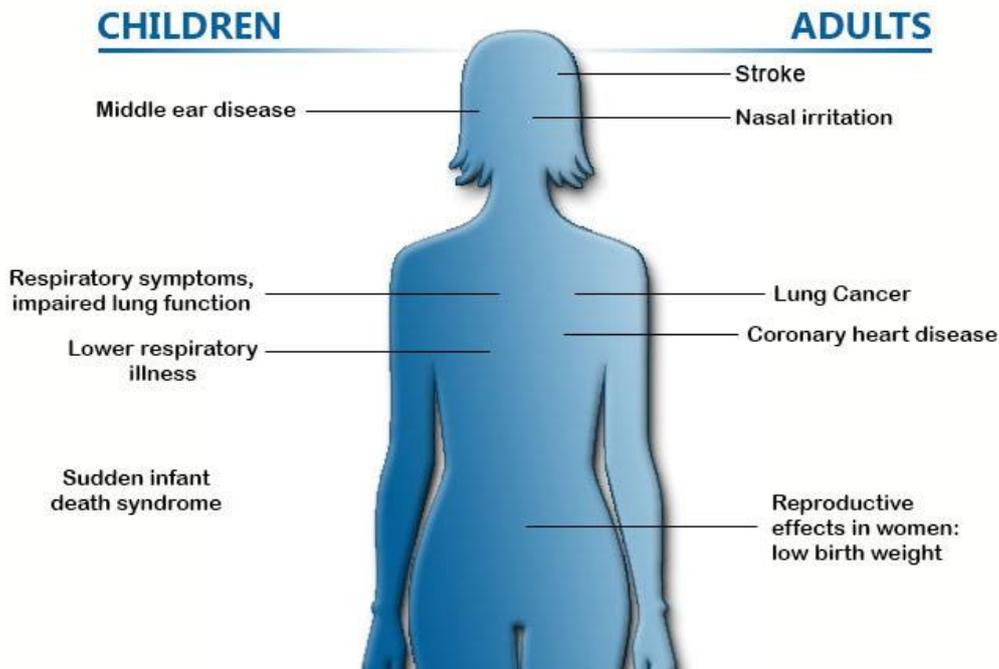
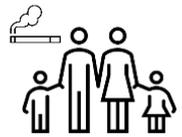
Pregnant women should avoid the smoke from cigarettes. Smoking mothers-to-be deliver babies, who on average weigh about 150–250 grams less than non-smokers' newborns.



Children exposed to second-hand smoking at home are especially vulnerable.

The infants of parents who are smoking at home don't have a choice to avoid the second-hand smoke. Cigarette smoke can cause serious health problems. It was reported that children exposed to second-hand smoke are at the higher risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). According to one US study, the lungs of infants who die from SIDS show higher concentrations of nicotine and higher levels of cotinine. Cotinine is a biological marker for secondhand smoke exposure.

It was proven that children exposed to second-hand smoke grow up with weaker lungs, they are sick more often, and wheezing, coughing and shortness of breath are more common. They are more vulnerable to ear infections as well as severe asthma attacks, which can put their life in danger.



Source: CDS Health Effects of Second-hand Smoking

As you can see from this diagram above, second-hand smoking has significant effects on our health. So, what we can do to avoid second-hand smoke?

- *Do not allow anybody to smoke in or near your home, explain to them why*
- *Do not allow anybody to smoke in your car, window down isn't the solution, explain to them why*
- *Speak up if you are exposed to second-hand smoke at your workplace, talk with your smoking colleagues about your concerns*
- *If your country or state still allows smoking in public areas, avoid restaurants and other places which are not tobacco-free, "no-smoking" sections aren't an effective solution to protect your family*
- *Be the role model, show your kids that cigarettes aren't part of your life, speak with them about possible health issues which tobacco products cause, create #TobaccoFreeGeneration*
- *If you are smoker, be a role model of positive change, find out about your cessation possibilities*
- *As a nurse, don't forget to ask your patients about second-hand smoking, encourage them to avoid it if possible.*

To quit tobacco products yourself is never easy. However, to show the healthier way to others can be even more difficult. Let's be patient and speak with smokers continuously about their possibilities, give them support, help them believe that they can quit. Let's help them to become healthier without tobacco smoke. Let's do it for them as well as for ourselves.

Find out more and download the PrEvCan resources on second-hand smoking.

References:

[1] [European Code Against Cancer - Why should non-smokers breathing other people's smoke be concerned about developing lung cancer? \(iarc.fr\)](#)

[2] [Health Effects of Secondhand Smoke | CDC](#)

[3] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General](#). Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014

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[5] Institute of Medicine Committee on Secondhand Smoke Exposure and Acute Coronary Events. [Secondhand Smoke Exposure and Cardiovascular Effects: Making Sense of the Evidence](#). Washington, D.C., National Academies Press 2010