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# Second-Hand Smoke and Children

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Second-hand smoke contains over 4,000 substances. Over 40 of these are known to cause cancer. Some of these are present in higher amounts than in smoke inhaled directly from a cigarette.

*Second-hand smoke contains:*

- *Benzopyrene, found in coal tar*
- *Formaldehyde, used to preserve dead animals*
- *Hydrogen cyanide, used in rat poison*
- *Ammonia, used to clean floors and toilets*

**Expectant mothers who smoke or are exposed to second-hand smoke are at risk for :**

- miscarriage
- stillbirth
- having a low birth weight baby

**Toxins are also passed to the developing baby and may result in:**

- reduced lung function
- birth defects like cleft lip

**Second- hand smoke is especially harmful to children because:**

- they breathe at a faster rate so absorb more toxins
- they have lungs and an immune system that is not fully developed

- they may be unable to complain when the smoke is bothering them
- they are less able to remove themselves from smoky areas.

**Second-hand smoke has been shown to cause serious health problems such as:**

- bronchitis and pneumonia
- chronic cough
- ear infections
- more frequent and severe asthma attacks
- less oxygen flow to tissues
- increased risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- childhood cancers and leukemia
- heart disease
- tooth decay
- slower growth and development
- unhealthy cholesterol levels

*There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke for children.*

## Third-Hand Smoke

Did you know that third-hand smoke is also harmful? Third-hand smoke contains toxins that remain in places where people have previously smoked. Third-hand smoke can be found on walls, carpets, drapes, furniture, clothing, toys, hair and skin.

## Protect your children:

- Quit smoking– it is never too late to quit.
- Never smoke around others, especially pregnant women, infants and children.
- Do not allow smoking in your home or vehicle.
- Ensure that your childcare is smoke-free.
- Do not rely on a fan, air purifier or open window to rid the air of cancer-causing chemicals.
- Do not take children to places or events where smoking is allowed.
- Never leave a lit cigarette unattended.

Remember - children model what they see their parents doing. The best way to prevent your children from smoking is to not smoke yourself.

*Children whose parents smoke are twice as likely to become regular smokers themselves*

## For help to quit tobacco:

- Go to [www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca](http://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca), or call **(306) 655-4685** to get the booklet “Are you Thinking About Quitting?”

## Smokers Helpline

- 1-877-513-5333
- [smokershelpline.ca](http://smokershelpline.ca)

## PACT (Partnership to Assist with Cessation of Tobacco)

- [www.makeapact.ca](http://www.makeapact.ca)

*The Saskatchewan Government has passed legislation making it illegal to smoke in a vehicle when a child under the age of 16 is present.*