

# Secondhand Smoke



## Is my smoking really harmful to my child?

Yes! When you smoke near your child, they breathe smoke, too. Smoke from the burning end of the cigarette contains:

- Over 200 poisons, like arsenic and cyanide, that cause cancer
- Tiny particles of soot and tar, which travel deep into your child's lungs
- Toxic gases, like carbon monoxide

The same poisons you breathe in as a smoker are more harmful to your child because they are not filtered.

## How does my smoking harm my child's lungs?

If your child is breathing in your smoke (or someone else's), they can get sick more often than other children. Your child can get:

- More colds
- More ear infections
- More coughing, wheezing and stuffy noses
- More asthma

Cigarette smoke can be especially dangerous to your child if they have lung or heart problems. The hot air dries out the lining of their airways and makes them sore. Your smoke can even trigger a trip to the emergency room or hospital. Being around smoke increases an infant's risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

## You can do a lot to keep your smoke away from your children

- Do not allow anyone to smoke anywhere inside your home or car.
- Post "No Smoking" signs in your home and car to remind yourself and others.
- Try to quit smoking—this may be the right time.
- If you can't quit, smoke outside only!
  - Only smoking near an open window or in a certain room like a bedroom does not keep smoke away from your children.
  - Do not smoke in your car, even if your child is not in the car.
  - Wear a special jacket when smoking that you can remove before coming back into the house.
- Wash your hair, clothes and hands often to reduce the smell of smoke.
- If you can smell smoke, it's getting into your child's lungs.

Remember that it's up to the adults to protect the children. Small things you do can make a big difference in your child's health!

### To Learn More

- Pulmonary Medicine  
206-987-2174
- Ask your child's  
healthcare provider
- [www.seattlechildrens.org](http://www.seattlechildrens.org)

### Information and resources on quitting smoking:

- Washington State Tobacco Quit Line  
1-877-270-STOP  
Spanish: 1-877-2NOFUME  
TTY: 1-877-777-6534
- American Lung Association, 206-441-5100, [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)
- American Cancer Society, 1-800-ACS-2345, [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

### Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask  
your child's nurse.
- From outside the  
hospital, call the  
toll-free Family  
Interpreting Line  
1-866-583-1527.  
Tell the interpreter  
the name or extension  
you need.
- For Deaf and hard of  
hearing callers  
206-987-2280 (TTY)

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Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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