



## **Not a very pretty picture...**

Second-hand smoke is harmful for everyone, but it's especially harmful for babies and children. Second-hand smoke can cause ear infections, breathing problems, SIDS, and serious diseases in kids. Kids deserve special protection against second-hand smoke. Kids should also be protected against third-hand smoke, the smoke that **gets trapped in furniture, carpet and fabric**, and sticks around even after people butt out.

### **Why are children especially at risk from second-hand and third-hand smoke?**

*Babies and children are especially vulnerable to second- and third-hand smoke because:*

- They have faster breathing rate: they breathe in more air relative to their body weight, which means they absorb more smoke
- Their immune systems are less developed
- They have less power and they're less able to complain about being around smoke
- They are less able to leave smoky places by themselves

### **How does second-hand smoke harm children's health?**

Kids who are exposed to second-hand smoke are at higher risk for many serious health problems.

#### **Compared to other kids, children who regularly breathe second-hand smoke have:**

- More risk of dying from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- More cough and wheeze
- More cases of asthma, and among kids with asthma, worse asthma symptoms
- More ear infections
- Less lung capacity
- More respiratory tract infections (bronchitis, croup, pneumonia, etc.)
- Lower test scores in math, reading and logic
- More chance of taking up smoking themselves

**There is also growing evidence that kids exposed to second-hand smoke are more at risk of developing cancer later in life. And new research suggests that kids who are exposed to second-hand smoke may have more behaviour problems than other kids.**

Second-hand smoke also harms babies before they are born.

**When pregnant mothers smoke or breathe second-hand smoke, their babies can get serious health problems.** It's important that pregnant women don't smoke, and that they stay away from second-hand smoke.

### **How many childhood diseases and deaths in Canada can be blamed on second-hand smoke?**

**The non-profit group Physicians for a Smoke-free Canada estimates that in Canada, second-hand smoke is responsible for:**

- 13% of ear infections: about 220,000 ear infections per year in children
- 26% of tympanostomy ear tube insertions : about 16,500 per year
- 24% of tonsillectomies and adenoidectomies: about 2,100 operations per year
- 13% of asthma cases: about 52,200 cases per year
- 16% of physician visits for cough: about 200,000 visits per year
- 20% of all lung infections in children under 5: about 43,600 cases of bronchitis and 19,000 cases of pneumonia per year
- 136-212 childhood deaths from lower respiratory infection: about 13-20 deaths per year
- 148 childhood deaths from fires started by tobacco products: about 15 deaths per year
- About 180-270 deaths per year from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

## How many kids are exposed to second-hand smoke in Canada?



Data collected by Health Canada in 2007 showed that 7% of children under the age of 12 (about 290,042 children) were regularly exposed to second-hand smoke at home. A report based on 2003 data found that 16 % of 12-year-olds were regularly exposed to second-hand smoke in public spaces, and 17% were regularly exposed to second-hand smoke in private vehicles.

**It's time to protect our children** and quit exposing them to second and third hand smoke. The Canadian Cancer Society is taking a stand and is working toward legislation that will ban smoking in cars with kids all across Canada.

**If you need any further information regarding children and the harmful effects of second & third hand smoke please call: 1-888-939-3333**

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