



# Butler County Drug & Alcohol Program

## Fact Sheet: Secondhand Smoke

Phone: 724-284-5114

Fax: 724-284-5128

- **Secondhand smoke, also known as environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) or passive smoke, is a mixture of 2 forms of smoke from burning tobacco products:**
  - **Sidestream smoke**: smoke that comes from the end of a lighted cigarette, pipe, or cigar
  - **Mainstream smoke**: smoke which is exhaled by a smoker.
- **ETS is involuntarily inhaled by nonsmokers and lingers in the air hours after cigarettes have been extinguished**
- **Secondhand smoke is classified as a "known human carcinogen" (cancer-causing agent) by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the US National Toxicology Program, and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a branch of the World Health Organization.**
- **Even short exposures to second hand smoke can cause blood platelets to become stickier, damage the lining of blood vessels, decrease coronary flow velocity reserves, and reduce heart rate variability, potentially increasing the risk of heart attack.**
- **Private research conducted by cigarette company Philip Morris in the 1980s showed that secondhand smoke was highly toxic, yet the company suppressed the findings for two decades.**
- **The 2006 Surgeon General's Report concluded that scientific evidence indicates that there is no risk-free level of exposure to second hand smoke.**
- **The 2006 US Surgeon General's report also concluded secondhand smoke:**
  - **Causes premature death and disease in children and in adults who do not smoke and contains hundreds of chemicals known to be toxic or carcinogenic, including formaldehyde, benzene, vinyl chloride, arsenic ammonia and hydrogen cyanide.**
  - **Causes 1,900 to 2,700 sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) deaths in the U. S. annually.**
  - **Causes increased incidence of middle ear infections in young children resulting in 700,000 to 1.6 million physician office visits per year.**
  - **Is responsible for 46,000 deaths from heart disease in people who live with smokers but are not current smokers.**
  - **Causes approximately 3,400 lung cancer deaths in nonsmoking adults.**
  - **Causes 150,000 to 300,000 lower respiratory tract infections (pneumonia and bronchitis) in children younger than 18 months of age, which result in 7,500 to 15,000 hospitalizations.**
  - **Increases the number and severity of asthma attacks in about 400,000 to 1 million asthmatic children.**
  - **Causes other respiratory problems in nonsmokers, including coughing, phlegm, chest discomfort, and reduced lung function.**
  - **Smoking by parents causes respiratory symptoms and slows lung growth in their children.**
  - **Exposure of adults to secondhand smoke has immediate adverse effects on the cardiovascular system and causes coronary heart disease (by 25%) and lung cancer.**
  - **Scientific evidence indicates there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke.**
  - **Many millions of Americans, both children and adults, are still exposed to secondhand smoke in their homes and workplaces despite substantial progress in tobacco control.**
  - **Eliminating smoking in indoor spaces fully protects nonsmokers from exposure to secondhand smoke. Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings cannot eliminate exposures of nonsmokers to secondhand smoke.**
- **Pregnant women exposed to ETS are at increased risk of having low birth weight babies.**
- **Levels of ETS in restaurants and bars were found to be 2 to 5 times higher than in private residences with smokers, and 2 to 6 times higher than in office workplaces.**

- **Since 1999, 70 percent of the U.S. workforce worked under a smoke-free policy. Workplace productivity increased and absenteeism decreased among former smokers compared with current smokers.**
- **Currently, 14 states have already passed strong smoke-free air laws.**
- **As of 2005, nine smoke-free states prohibit smoking in almost all workplaces, including restaurants and bars (CA, CT, DE, ME, MA, NY, RI, VT and WA).**
- **In the United States, 21 million, or 35 percent of children live in homes where residents or visitors smoke in the home on a regular basis. Approximately 50-75 percent of children in the United States have detectable levels of nicotine in their blood.**
- **Both mainstream and sidestream smoke contain approximately 20 chemicals that, in high concentrations, cause breast cancer in rodents.**
- **Chemicals in tobacco smoke reach breast tissue and are found in breast milk.**

**Sources: American Cancer Society & American Lung Association**

**Additional Resources:**

Tobacco Morbidity and Mortality Trend Report (American Lung Association) as well as a Lung Disease Data publication in the [Data and Statistics](#) section, or call the American Lung Association at 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872).

American Cancer Society <http://www.cancer.org> 1-800-ACS-2345 (1-800-227-2345).

American Heart Association  
 Telephone: 1-800-AHA-USA-1 (1-800-242-8721)  
 Internet Address: [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

American Lung Association  
 Telephone: 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872)  
 Internet Address: [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
 Internet Address: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
 Office on Smoking and Health  
 Internet Address: [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/)

National Cancer Institute  
 Telephone: 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)  
 Internet Address: [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

Smokefree.gov  
 (Info on state phone-based quitting programs)  
 Telephone: 1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669)  
 Internet Address: [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)