

Know the Truth about Second Hand Smoke

You don't have to be a person who smokes, for smoking to harm you. Once a cigarette is lit, it gives off smoke you can see, and 69 cancer causing poisons you can't see. Even when someone who smokes tries to clear the air, these toxins travel, exposing everything and everyone in their way with their effects.

Second hand smoke is *just as serious* as active smoke. It is produced by the burning end of the cigarette (side stream smoke) and the smoke exhaled from the lungs of the person smoking (mainstream smoke). Of the complex mixture of more than 4,000 chemicals found in second hand smoke, at least 250 are known to be harmful and 69 are known to be carcinogens, cancer-causing agents. A person breathing second hand smoke is exposed to the same tar and nicotine as the person who is smoking. Some adolescents who are constantly inhaling the tainted air become addicted to nicotine and report they want to quit, but are unable to do so. The Federal Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Surgeon General have declared that there is **no** safe level of exposure to second hand smoke.

Almost 4,000 teenagers aged 12-15 start smoking each day. This increases the risk of your child inhaling the contaminated air of his or her peers or worse yet, being involved in smoking-related behaviors such as alcohol and drug use. Since 12-15 year olds are at the age of peak development, they are more vulnerable to the hazardous effects and consequences of second hand smoke. Exposure is linked to increasing the risk of heart disease, asthma, lung cancer, nasal sinus cancer, and respiratory tract infections like pneumonia and bronchitis. Each year 53,000 people die from illnesses directly linked to second hand smoke.

Talk to your teens. Educate your children about the adverse effects of being exposed to second hand smoke and the toll it can take on their future. Encourage them to choose healthy friends and a healthy lifestyle. Teenagers are involved in the social world—school, work, and public places—all of which could expose them second hand smoke. Be actively involved in teaching them about healthy choices and values. Teach them to take a stand against secondhand smoke.

Secondhand smoke is a killer. Because you care, protect your teens. Educate and be involved.

If you or someone you know is ready to quit using tobacco,

Call **1-866-NEW-LUNG** for FREE help.