The Facts About Secondhand Smoke

The 2006 Surgeon General's Report
The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke

> *"The scientific evidence is now indisputable: secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance. It is a serious health hazard that can lead to disease and premature death in children and nonsmoking adults."*
> – U.S. Surgeon General, Vice Admiral Richard H. Carmona, M.D., M.P.H., FACS

✦ What is secondhand smoke?
Secondhand smoke is the smoke from the burning end of a cigarette combined with the smoke breathed out by smokers.

✦ Why is secondhand smoke so dangerous?
Secondhand smoke is known to cause cancer in humans.It contains more than 7,000 chemicals, including formaldehyde, ammonia, lead, chromium, benzene and arsenic. More than 70 of these chemicals can cause cancer. You breathe in these chemicals when you are around someone who is smoking.

✦ Is it okay if I am exposed to secondhand smoke for just a short amount of time?
There is no risk-free level of exposure to second-hand smoke. Breathing even a little secondhand smoke can be dangerous and harm your health.

✦ What are the risks to my health if I am exposed to secondhand smoke?
Nonsmokers who inhale secondhand smoke at home or at work are more likely to become sick and die from heart disease and lung cancer. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued an advisory warning all people with a heart condition or those predisposed to heart disease to avoid all indoor environments where smoking is allowed.

✦ What can I do to avoid exposure to secondhand smoke and protect my health?
- Avoid public places that allow smoking.
- Choose restaurants and bars that are smoke-free. Thank them for being smoke-free.
- Let owners of businesses that are not smoke-free know that secondhand smoke is harmful to your health.
- Make your car and home smoke-free.