



What Are the Health Effects of Secondhand Smoke?

It is estimated that secondhand smoke causes between 1100 and 7800 deaths each year in Canada, including 300 lung cancer deaths. Secondhand smoke increases risk of suffering from several diseases and conditions such as the following:

Heart disease (cardiovascular):

- Coronary heart disease

Cancer:

- Lung cancer
- Nasal sinus cancer

Respiratory disease:

- Bronchitis and pneumonia (lower respiratory tract infection)
- Asthma in children
- Worsening of asthma
- Middle ear disease in children
- Decreased pulmonary capacity
- Worsening of cystic fibrosis

Developmental effects:

- Low birth weight (less than 2500 grams – 5.5 pounds)
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Miscarriage
- Adverse impact learning process and behaviour

Sources:

Ontario Tobacco Research Unit. Protection from second-hand smoke in Ontario – A review of the evidence regarding best practices. 2001

National Cancer Institute of Canada. Canadian Cancer Statistics 2000.

Created November 2001