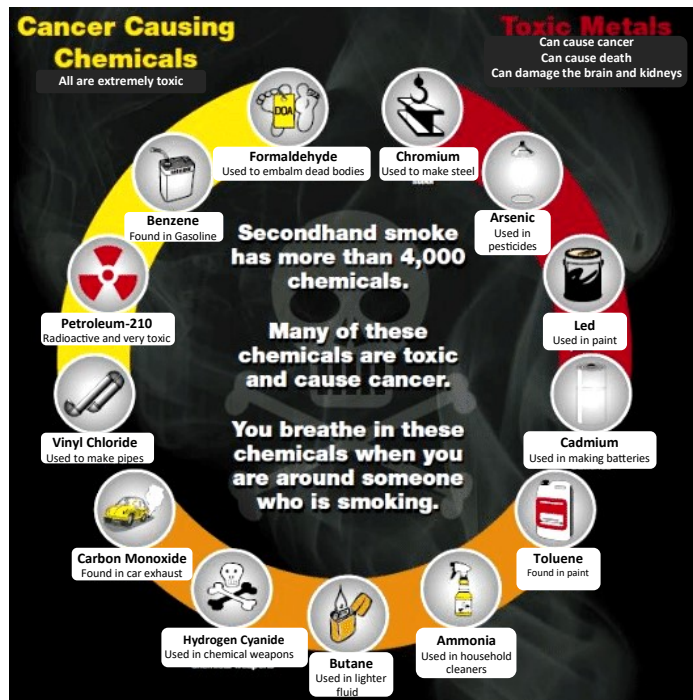


The Truth About Secondhand Smoke



Every pack of cigarettes has a label on it warning you of the dangers to your health. Yet for millions of smokers world-wide, it is ignored. You feel the harmful effects that smoking does to your lungs and body, yet you continue to smoke. But what about those around you that have not made the same choice that you did? Do they not get a say?

Secondhand smoke and the health problems that are associated with it continues to be a problem that many non-smokers face on a daily basis. It's not just the smoke coming from the person exhaling the pollutants from their mouth and nose, but also the trail of smoke that a burning cigarette or cigar leaves sitting on an ash tray as well as the ashes themselves that can harm non-smokers.



Health Effects of Secondhand Smoke

Over time, secondhand smoke has been known to be associated with serious health risks in non-smokers.

These health risks include lung cancer, heart disease, heart attacks or strokes, breathing problems such as asthma or emphysema, wheezing and shortness of breath.

Mothers who breathe secondhand smoke suffer the same health issues as smokers and are more likely to have babies with lower birth weights. After birth, babies tend to have more respiratory infections than those not around secondhand smoke and continued exposure can lead to your child developing asthma with more frequent and severe attacks as well as get sick more often.

Children are not the only ones affected from secondhand smoke. Adults in and around their workplace are also exposed to secondhand smoke and can cause health problems. The Federal office of the Surgeon General has said the only way to protect non-smokers from secondhand smoke is to not smoke around non-smokers at all.

Steps You Can Take

It's not enough to just have a designated place to smoke, or to say that you will smoke outside or away from others. Remember, you are a powerful role model. If you don't smoke, your children and other family members are less likely to smoke or may even give them a reason to quit. Here are some steps you can take to make it easier to breathe for everyone and yourself:

- Remove all smoking items from inside your house and vehicle and smoke only outdoors. Smoking with the windows down or open may not be enough as particles from the cigarette smoke have been shown to settle on surfaces which can be inhaled by others.
- If your kids' school or day care allows faculty or visitors to smoke on or around campus, check what their smoking policy is and ask that they enforce it.
- If you have a in-home or live-in nanny or babysitter, ensure that they understand smoking inside or around your children will not be tolerated.

The only way that you can truly prevent secondhand smoke is to not smoke at all. Remember, it's not just your health that is impacted from smoking. When you smoke, you may miss out on spending time with family, having that extra money in your pocket to spend on the people that you love, and sets a poor example for your kids', family and others who depend on you to be around. Become smoke free. Contact your health provider to find out ways that you can quit or visit: freedomquitline.org or smokefree.gov.

References:

1. American Heart Association; Why Is It So Hard To Quit
2. American Cancer Society; Why People Start Smoking and Why It's So Hard To Stop
3. HHS Be Tobacco Free.gov; Don't Start

A Personal Message From Your Health Promotion Health Myth Busting Team



Dear Health Myth Busters,

I've heard that secondhand smoke is really bad for you. I'm not really interested in smoking or being exposed to secondhand smoke. Yuck! But at work I've noticed smokers get breaks, while the rest of us have to keep working. I've seen people laughing it up and sometimes they seem to be having informal meetings. What gives? Is this another urban myth?

Sincerely,
Not Fair

Dear Not Fair

Congratulations on remaining tobacco free in the midst of what appears to be compelling reasons to at least join the group for socialization. Despite your impression that smoking may be an easy gateway to more on the job breaks, joining your friends at the pit is not the way to go to get more break time. Secondhand smoke is a mixture of what is exhaled by a smoker and what is escaping from the lighted end of their cigarette. Secondhand smoke has the same harmful chemicals that smokers inhale. There's no safe level of exposure for secondhand smoke.

Unfortunately, your perceptions may not be based on a total myth. "Smoke breaks" are sometimes a common, unofficially sanctioned workplace activity. Nevertheless, AFI 40-102 Tobacco Free Living states: 'supervisors will ensure tobacco use does not entitle tobacco users to additional break time from duties compared with non-tobacco users'. If this is happening in your workplace, don't just wander off as a countermeasure. Well timed mental and physical breaks have been shown to increase productivity. I encourage you to make an appointment with your boss to get permission for breaks at a time that is convenient for both of you.

Sincerely,
Health Myth Busters

Got questions on other health issues related to sleep health, physical activity, tobacco, or nutrition? Share them with us and we will help you "Bust The Myths!" Send your questions to usaf.jbsa.afmoa.mbx.hpo@mail.mil. Make sure to include in the subject line "Health Myth Buster." For more online health tips visit the Air Force Healthy Living webpage <http://www.airforcemedicine.af.mil/HealthyLiving/> or <https://www.facebook.com/Joint-Base-Andrews-Health-Promotion-120094328077726/>



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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Classes are held at Malcolm Grow Medical Clinic, 1060 West Perimeter Road, JB Andrews, MD			
Sleep Enhancement Class Register at: 240-612-1130 Healthy Heart Class, 0900 2nd Mon, 240-612-2396 Weight Mgmt Class, 0800 4th Mon, 240-612-2703	Diabetes Self Mgmt Education Register at: 240-612-2396 Tobacco Cessation Program Register at: 240-857-8942 Stress Mgmt & Relaxation Trng Register at: 240-857-8942	May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month! Find out how you can #GetActive this month: http://bit.ly/2kxuUC9	HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICES Base Nutrition Environment Assessment (mNEAT) Health Improvement Briefings Unit Force Health Reports Metabolic analysis (JBAB only)	1- 31 May: May Fitness Tactical Fitness Challenge (WFC) 19 May – 0630: JBA Chiefs Group 6th Annual Half Marathon