

# The ripple effect of smoking

[Health & Medicine](#), [Addiction](#)



The Ripple Effect of Smoking It has become common knowledge that smoking is bad for people's health, nonetheless people continue to smoke. To be honest, that is fine. If people want to endanger themselves by smoking then I wish them a swift and peaceful end (though most smokers die a slow and agonizing death). What is not acceptable is the effect that smoke has on non-smokers who have almost no way of getting away from smoke unless they want to stay in their house.

Smokers affect everyone around them for the worse. Smoking should be restricted or banned from all public places because the health of non-smokers should not be jeopardized by secondhand smoke. As stated before, almost everyone knows and accepts the fact that smoking is unhealthy. For those who don't know, Phillip Morris, one of the leading tobacco manufacturers, must tell them that very fact.

As part of a settlement agreement with the government, Philip Morris must publish that they " agrees with the overwhelming medical and scientific consensus that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema (where the lungs basically break down), and other serious diseases in smokers" (Philip Morris U. S. A. 1). Yet some don't know how bad smoking actually is for people, both for the smokers and non-smokers alike. According to Michele Late, author for The Nation's Health, published by the American Public Health Association, " A new report by the U. S. surgeon general found that smoking causes disease in almost every organ of the human body. " So aside from common knowledge that smoking causes lung cancer as well as other respiratory problems and diseases, people need to know that it also causes cancer in almost every other part of the body.

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Among those diseases are, “ leukemia, cataracts, and pneumonia as well as cancers of the pancreas, cervix, and kidneys” (Late). According to the surgeon general’s report, “ Other complications linked to smoking includeddiabetescomplications, hip fractures and reproductive complications” (Late).

Why anyone would want to smoke with the knowledge that smoking causes these problems is beyond reason. Ultimately though, it is a person’s choice as to whether they want to cause harm to themselves by smoking or not. Although people may choose to smoke, it is unfair of them to inflict the consequences of their choice upon others. The smoke that smokers put out into the air is nearly as harmful as what they take in to their own systems. When non- smokers happen to be in the vicinity of a smoker they inhale what the smoker puts out. This is called secondhand smoke. A definition from Philip Morris U.

S. A. ’s website states that, “ Secondhand smoke, also known as environmental tobacco smoke or ETS, is a combination of the smoke coming from the lit end of a cigarette plus the smoke exhaled by a person smoking” (Philip Morris U. S. A2). Secondhand smoke is almost as harmful to the non-smoker as the firsthand smoke is to the smoker. According to William V. Corr, the executive director of Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, “ Secondhand smoke contains over 4, 000 chemicals and 69 known carcinogens, including formaldehyde, cyanide, arsenic, carbon monoxide, methane, benzene, and radioactive polonium 210. With all these known cancer causing products in secondhand smoke, it is not surprising that, “

secondhand smoke is proven to cause lung cancer and serious respiratory illnesses” (Corr). Secondhand smoke also causes, “ asthma, respiratory infections, cough, wheeze, otitis media (middle ear infection) and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome,” (Philip Morris U. S. A. 2) in children. According to Donna Halvorsen, writer for the Star Tribune in Minneapolis, “ The CDC (The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention) estimates that 3, 000 nonsmokers die of lung cancer caused by secondhand smoke each year.

An additional 35, 000 die of heart disease also from secondhand smoke...” It is unfair to make those who choose not to smoke be damaged by the secondhand smoke of a smoker. What is the solution to this problem? The most effective solution is to ban smoking in all public places. If people who want to smoke then they can do so in the privacy of their own homes, where they can only hurt themselves and their loved ones. California has taken the first step by banning smoking in most indoor establishments. Yet more has to be done. It needs to be banned outdoors in public as well.

Though the theory that outdoors smoke dissipates has some validity, if you are within 20 feet of a smoker, you are still affected. Other atmospheric conditions can cause you to be affected from farther away. There will be arguments against this solution, the main one being personal freedom. Opponents will say that their personal freedom to smoke is being violated. Though right now, smokers are violating millions of people’s rights. A non-smoker’s right to live in an uncontaminated and healthy environment is being violated by the smoker who chooses to engage in this repulsive habit.

A non-smoker's right to a longer, pain free life is being taken away by the diseases they get from inhaling secondhand smoke. This solution, though the most effective, is also the most extreme. Until we reach an ideal society where smoking is nonexistent, there are ways to help alleviate the problems posed by secondhand smoke. One is to have separate rooms in public places with high quality air filters. They have started doing this in airports. A new renovation is smokeless cigarettes. A U. S. company that makes this product is Longherb Health Products, Inc.

According to them, “ This smokeless product, which consists of a menthol or cinnamon-flavored filter material - like that used in a cigarette filter - looks and feels like a cigarette, but contains no tobacco or nicotine, and does not burn. The smokers simply draw or inhale on Smoker's Option Cigarettes whenever they have the desire to smoke cigarettes. ” Unfortunately there is the problem that cigarettes are addictive. Some who are addicted to cigarettes need one every hour. An addiction causes physical pain when you don't have your addictive substance.

To help people quit there are many different solutions. They range from patches, to gum, to medication. Philip Morris U. S. A. has links on their website that can help you quit smoking, one being QuitAssist™ . The information for quit assist was written by and is maintained by Cheryl K. Olson, Sc. D. of Harvard Medical School, as well as a review board.

Secondhand smoke is a problem that must be dealt with. There are alternatives to smoking and ways to deal with secondhand smoke. Smoking

must be banned or severely restricted in public for the well being of the multitudes of innocent non-smokers.