

The truth about second hand smoking

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The Truth about Second Hand Smoking

Second hand smoking has been a major issue of debate owing to the fact that many researches that have been conducted have provided evidence for the major health issues that result due to the exposure to this second hand smoke. Second hand smoking is basically the exposure of tobacco smoke to those individuals who are not smokers themselves. This smoke comes from different sources which include the burning of cigarettes and other sources of tobacco. The other major source of this second hand smoke is the smoke that is puffed out during smoking by the smokers. The air becomes contaminated with this smoke which is then inhaled by other people who are in close vicinity to the smokers and this is termed as second hand smoking. This exposure can occur in different locations which include offices and other public locations. The involuntary exposure to this harmful smoke has led to many questions as to why be the health of the individuals who do not smoke put at risk (Institute of Medicine (U. S.) 2010). Therefore second hand smoking is a subject of concern due to the ill health effects that it can produce for the people who are exposed to it.

Second hand smoke is believed to consist of approximately seven hundred chemical agents. Out of these 700 chemicals, seventy can result in cancerous production in the exposed individuals. Moreover other chemicals that are harmful to the human beings are also contained in this smoke. The severity of the issue can be analyzed by the statistics provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which highlight the fact that in young infants up till the age of 1 and a half year, a maximum of 300, 000 cases of bronchitis and pneumonia are reported each year in the United States. Also, there may be as many as 15000 hospitalizations of these young

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children every year due to the exposure to second hand smoke. It has further been presented that 88 million residents of the United States were exposed to this form of smoke in the year 2008 alone (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2011).

Second hand smoke can result in the loss of the life of the baby within one year of birth which is a condition referred to as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. It can lead to other infectious diseases which include infections of the ear in young children. The health of young children whose mothers are exposed to second hand smoke during pregnancy is also affected and these children may have pathologies of lung and they can also present with low birth weights. Asthma is another issue that results amongst children who are highly exposed to second hand smoke. The adults can also suffer from serious health conditions because of this second hand smoke. This includes cardiac problems and alterations in the normal blood physiology. The most severe consequence of second hand smoking amongst adults is the carcinoma of the lung and it also increases the susceptibility of developing this cancer by almost 30 percent (United States 2006). It has been reported that 3400 people who are not firsthand smokers die every year in the United States from lung carcinoma owing to the second hand smoke (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2011). Second hand smoke can aggravate certain allergies of the skin and nose and it can also result in problems with normal breathing patterns. Association of second hand smoke with cancer of the breast and stroke is also being established through researches (United States 2006).

To overcome this issue, there have been restrictions on smoking in the United States in many public places as well as in the offices. The people

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suffering from lung cancers as well as cardiac issues should be particularly careful and avoid this exposure to prevent the aggravation of their health problems. Proper awareness can also prove to be of assistance in overcoming the issue (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2011; United States 2006).

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Top of Form

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