

Background Information

Second-Hand Smoke and Third-Hand Smoke

Second-Hand Smoke (SHS)

Second-hand smoke (also referred to as ETS: environmental tobacco smoke) is made up of the smoke from the burning end of a tobacco product such as a cigarette, cigarillo, pipe, etc., and the smoke that is blown into the air by the person smoking these products.

Second-hand smoke has over 4,000 chemicals; many of them cause disease. Two-thirds of the smoke from a cigarette is not inhaled by the person smoking, so it enters into the air. There is five times the amount of carbon monoxide and higher levels of ammonia and cadmium in SHS.

Second-hand smoke also has toxic levels of hydrogen cyanide (a poisonous gas that attacks the respiratory enzymes) and high amounts of nitrogen dioxide. People who do not smoke who breathe in SHS can develop many serious diseases. It can cause lung cancer, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD, formerly known as emphysema and chronic bronchitis), and can lead to asthma. Regular exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of lung disease by 25% and heart disease by 10%.

For more information on second-hand smoke, see the following link:

http://www.lung.ca/protect-protegez/tobacco-tabagisme/second-secontaire/index_e.php

Third-Hand Smoke (THS)

Third-hand smoke is a new name for an old problem – it is the toxic chemicals in smoke that stick around even after the person has put out the cigarette, cigar, or pipe. Third-hand smoke gets trapped in hair, skin, fabric, carpet, furniture and toys. It builds up over time. Each time someone smokes, more smoke gets trapped in the things around them. The chemicals from the trapped smoke pollute the air and get into people's lungs and bodies.

For more information on third-hand smoke, see the following link:

http://www.lung.ca/protect-protegez/tobacco-tabagisme/second-secontaire/thirdhand-tertiaire_e.php