

SUFFOLATING SMOKE Cara's Story

Nineteen-year-old Cara was in her sophomore year of college. To help pay for rent and tuition, Cara took a part-time waitressing job at a local restaurant. One day, twenty minutes into her shift, she fell to the floor, gasping for air.

The problem? Cara's asthma, triggered by the smoke circling through the air all day long. As Cara continued to breathe in the smoke, it caused an acute asthma attack. She died within minutes.

Yes, Cara's story is rare. Most people who die from secondhand smoke are exposed to it for years. In fact, researchers believe that up to 50,000 people per year die from complications from secondhand smoke, like lung cancer and heart disease. Still, Cara's story shows that secondhand smoke can also have immediate effects [] with deadly results.

TALKING BACK

Don't just stand there when someone nearby is lighting up. Protect your lungs \mathbb{I} and your life \mathbb{I} by speaking up. You can use one of these lines:

- "Do you mind going outside to smoke?"
- "Can you hold off until I'm out of the car? I don't want to smell like smoke."
- "Smoke makes me feel sick. I'm going to leave until you're finished."
- "I'd prefer if you didn't smoke around me."

TRUE OR FALSE?

Do you know the facts about secondhand smoke? Answer the following to find out.

1. Secondhand smoke doesn't make you at risk for emphysema or lung cancer.

A. True

B. False

Opening a window will keep you from breathing harmful smoke.

A. True

B. False

3. There are 7000 dangerous chemicals in secondhand smoke.

A. True

B. False

4. Thirdhand smoke may be dangerous to developing babies.

A. True

B. False

5. Even non-smokers can die from health complications caused by secondhand smoke.

A. True

B. False



Answers: 1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. True; 5. True

STay safe series

© 2014 PRIMO PREVENTION, LLC • PO Box 371 • Reserve, LA 70084 985-359-7848 • www.primoprevention.com • PSS-DA-20

ALL CHOKED UP

SMOKE IN THE ROOM

If There's Smoke, You're Playing With Fire

People who smoke carry the smell on their clothes and in their hair. They have stained teeth, bad breath and they age faster than normal. They're also at a much higher risk for diseases like lung cancer and heart disease.

That's why you decided not to smoke, right?

But did you know that when you walk into a smoky restaurant or ride in a car with someone while they're smoking, that it's as bad as lighting? Secondhand smoke is just as dangerous and damaging to your body as smoking.

WHAT'S SECONDHAND SMOKE?

Secondhand smoke is smoke that comes off a cigarette, cigar, or pipe that someone else is smoking. It's also the big cloud of poison that a smoker exhales after taking a drag. If you're sitting or standing near that person, you're breathing in that nasty air.

A POISONOUS CLOUD

Chemicals You Inhale in Secondhand Smoke

Do you really need to worry about secondhand smoke? There are over 7,000 chemicals that you can inhale, or at least the 250 that are harmful and can cause cancer.

When you breathe in someone else's smoke, you're breathing in the same harmful toxins that

they are, including:

- Arsenic, a chemical used in rat poison
- Carbon monoxide, a poisonous gas
- Cadmium, used in batteries
- Cyanide, a poisonous gas
- Formaldehyde, used to embalm dead bodies
- Lead, a poisonous metal
- Nickel, a poisonous metal
- Vinyl chloride, a toxic metal used to make plastic





THE SHORT-TERM EFFECTS OF SECONDHAND SMOKE

You already know that smoking is bad for you, but check out the short-term effects of secondhand smoke:

- Coughing
- Frequent colds
- Chest discomfort
- Reduced lung function
- Lung infections, like bronchitis or pneumonia
- Asthma attacks

Young children and pets are at even greater risk of harm from secondhand smoke – it can cause brain tumors, ear infections, asthma, allergies, tooth decay and Crohn's disease, amongst other issues.

THE SAME RISKS

Long-term Effects of Secondhand Smoke

Research has shown that being exposed to secondhand smoke over a long period of time increases your risk for:

- · Lung cancer
- · Heart disease
- Emphysema
- · Premature death

That's not all: Secondhand smoke can also increase your chances of developing breast cancer, leukemia and other diseases.

CLEARING THE AIR

Frequently Asked Questions About Secondhand Smoke

- Q. What is a safe level of secondhand smoke?
- A. Unfortunately, any level of secondhand smoke is dangerous.

 Even breathing in small amounts can cause health problems, so stay away from smokers as much as possible.
- Q. Can I just open a window so the room doesn't get smoky?
- A. That's a good idea, but unfortunately it won't keep you from being exposed to secondhand smoke. Even when you can't see or smell smoke, it's still in the air. Also, smoking in the car with the window open is still harmful, especially since the car is such a small space.
- Q. How long does it take for a room to be safe after someone smokes in it?
- A. Smoke from just one cigarette can linger in a room for up to two and a half hours. Even if you can't smell it or see it, the dangerous chemicals are still there.
- Q. What about the smoke on my hair and clothes? Is that harmful?
- A. The nasty smell that smoke leaves on your hair and clothes is called "thirdhand smoke." Thirdhand smoke contains a residue of chemicals and toxins. Although doctors aren't sure if thirdhand smoke is as dangerous as secondhand smoke, they believe it to be harmful to the development of babies and small children. In any case, thirdhand smokes smells bad, and it's best to stay away.

