



Questions and Answers on Health Effects of Second-hand Smoke

What diseases are known to be caused by second-hand smoke?

In adults:

- Heart disease
- Lung Cancer
- Nasal sinus Cancer
- Non-malignant respiratory disease

In children:

- Sudden infant death syndrome
- Foetal growth impairment (low birth-weight and small for gestational age)
- Bronchitis, pneumonia and other lower respiratory tract infections
- Asthma exacerbation
- Middle ear disease

What other diseases are thought to be caused by second-hand smoke.

In adults:

- Stroke
- Breast cancer
- Cervical cancer
- Miscarriages

In children:

- Adverse impact on cognition and behaviour
- Decreased lung function
- Asthma induction
- Exacerbation of cystic fibrosis.

How many Canadians are estimated to be killed by second hand smoke each year?

Over 1000 (and possibly as many as 7800).

Health Canada has not yet conducted a complete review of second-hand smoke caused mortality.

Partial estimates were prepared during the 1990s. In 1996, Health Canada scientists estimated that there

are approximately 350 lung cancer deaths due to smoking each year. A study conducted with Health Canada a few years earlier concluded that second-hand smoke caused approximate 2000 heart-disease deaths per year. Health Canada estimates that approximately 100 children die each year as a result of maternal smoking and exposure to smoke in the home.

The most exhaustive study completed to-date was conducted by the California Environmental Protection Agency. It estimated that between 4,500 and 7,800 deaths can be attributed to second-hand smoke (most from heart disease) each year.

Sources:

National Institutes of Health. National Cancer Institute. Respiratory Health Effects of Passive Smoking: Lung Cancer and Other Disorders: The Report of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph Number 4. NIH Publication No. 93-3605, Washington, USA, August, 1993.

National Health and Medical Research Council. The health effects of passive smoking. Australia, November, 1997.

Department of Health. Report of the Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health. The Stationery Office. London, United Kingdom, March, 1998.

National Institutes of Health. National Cancer Institute. Health Effects of Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke: The Report of the California Environmental Protection Agency. Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph Number 10. NIH Publication No. 99-4645, Washington, USA, August, 1999.

World Health Organization. Tobacco Free Initiative. International Consultation on Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) and Child Health: Consultation Report. WHO Technical Document Number WHO/TFI/99.10. 1999.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Public Health Service. National Toxicology Program. 9th Report on Carcinogens. Washington, USA, 200017

Makomaski Illing EM, Kaiserman MJ. Mortality attributable to tobacco use in Canada and its regions, 1994 and 1996. *Chronic Disease in Canada* 1999; 20(3).

Decou ML. Impact of passive smoking to coronary heart disease mortality. M.Sc. Thesis. Queen's University. Kingston, Ontario, Canada, 1992.