



**PROTECT CHILDREN AT HOME AND IN THE CAR**



**Secondhand smoke can harm infants and children.**

Some reasons:

- Children breathe in more air for their size than adults.
- Children have less freedom to move away. They often need to be close to adults.
- Their immune system is less protective.

**Young children exposed to secondhand smoke have a higher risk of:**

- Tonsillitis
- Ear infections
- Sore eyes, noses and throats
- Cough, wheeze and asthma
- Hospital stays for bronchitis and pneumonia
- As babies, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or crib death

**What you can do as a parent:**

- Do not smoke in the car or let others smoke.
- Make your home smoke-free and only smoke outside.
- Consider quitting. Talk with your doctor or call the Smokers' Helpline (1.866.332.2322).

**What does or doesn't work – myths & questions about smoking in the home or car:**

- **Can't I just open a window?** No, no amount of smoking around children is safe. Having a window open does not protect children from the dangerous chemicals in smoke.
- **Can't I just smoke when the children aren't there?** No, the chemicals stay in the air. A total ban in the house and car is the best way to protect children.
- **Is smoking outside on the balcony okay?** Yes, but make sure windows and doors are closed so the smoke cannot drift back inside.
- **How do I tell visitors not to smoke in my home or car?** Let them know you are looking after your child's health by not allowing smoking inside. If you want to accommodate visitors who smoke, designate a smoking area outside. If you live in an apartment, suggest a walk outside for everyone, including the kids.
- **What if I really need a cigarette but can't leave the kids to go outside?** Use nicotine gum or a patch to curb your need to smoke at times when you can't leave the children. Or see if someone you trust would sit with your children for five minutes while you take a break to smoke.

*A message from your doctor and the Alberta Medical Association*

*Adapted from information by the Manitoba Lung Association/Manitoba Health & Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada*

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