



# Health Case for Smoke free Workplaces

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# Second hand smoke

- Second hand smoke is the tobacco smoke from other peoples cigarettes and cigars
- There is no safe level of exposure
- Cigarettes generate smoke in two ways, sidestream smoke and mainstream smoke

# Reviews of the effects of second hand smoke

- 1992 US Environmental Protection Agency
- 1998 Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health (SCOTH)
- 1999 World Health Organization – Environmental Tobacco Smoke and Child Health
- 1997 Report by California Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- 2002 International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)

# Results of reviews on second hand smoke

California EPA identified second hand smoking as a risk factor for

- Asthma exacerbation in adults
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Lung cancer
- Nasal cancer

# Results of reviews on second hand smoke

- IARC review concluded that " the evidence is sufficient to conclude that involuntary smoking is a cause of lung cancer in never smokers"

# Content of second hand smoke

- Contains a cocktail of 4,000 different substances
- Many are poisonous, 60 of these substances are known carcinogens
- Namely, ammonia, arsenic, mercury and formaldehyde
- Second hand smoke has been classified as a Group A (Human) Carcinogen, same status as asbestos, radon and benzene

US Environmental Protection Agency 1992

# Effects of second hand smoke

- Super fine particles enter deep into the lungs and small doses:-
- Causes lung cancer and ischaemic heart disease
- Increased risk of respiratory problems such as bronchitis and emphysema
- Chances of developing asthma are doubled
- Makes asthma sufferers breathing problems worse
- Can worsen allergies like hay fever

Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health 1998 (SCOTH)

National Asthma Campaign Survey 2003

# Effects of second hand smoke

- Estimated that 3500 people die each year in the UK from breathing other people's tobacco smoke
  - exposure at work leads to approx 700 deaths
- Pregnant women exposed to second hand smoke can pass on the harmful gases and chemicals to their babies
- Linked to low birth weight and sudden infant death syndrome

# Effects on non-smokers

- Short term exposure to second hand smoke has a measurable effect on the heart in non-smokers
- 30 minutes exposure is enough to reduce heart blood flow
- raised levels of tobacco breakdown products
- Raised levels of tobacco-related poisons and carcinogens such as carbon monoxide and nitrosamines
- Increased risk of lung cancer, ischaemic heart disease, respiratory problems

# Health case for smoke free workplaces

- Second hand smoke is a major health hazard
- There is no safe level of exposure
- More people die each year due to second hand smoke exposure than from asbestosis