



## TOBACCO SMOKE AND YOUR CHILD'S LUNGS

Even those who do not smoke can be at risk for health problems when they breathe in air polluted with tobacco smoke from other people's cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. This is called **secondhand smoke exposure**.\* The good news is that even though tobacco smoke is a common source of air pollution, it is also one that can be totally prevented and avoided. A person does not need to smoke to be hurt by tobacco smoke. Just being around tobacco smoke can be harmful to your child's health. Smoking, or allowing smoking in your home, also gives kids a message that it is okay and can increase the risk of them becoming smokers even if they have lung problems.

What makes tobacco smoke such a serious problem? Tobacco smoke:

- Has many harmful chemicals in it
- Stays in the air a long time, even after the cigarette, cigar, or pipe is put out
- Can move from room to room
- Can hurt your child's **lungs**\*

### RISKS OF SECONDHAND SMOKE EXPOSURE

Healthy children who grow up in homes where someone smokes are more likely to have:

- Colds
- Ear **infections**\*
- **Bronchitis**\*
- **Pneumonia**\*
- Reduced **lung function**\*
- Lung cancer later in life (even if they never smoke themselves)

Children who already have a lung disease, such as **cystic fibrosis**\* (CF\*) or **asthma**\*, are at even greater risk for health problems when they are around tobacco smoke. **Research**\* has shown that

children with CF who are regularly around tobacco smoke have a greater decline in lung function, and their disease worsens or progresses more than those who are not exposed. Lung damage from secondhand smoke exposure can happen silently for a long time. The damage can be there even if your child does not seem to have any **symptoms**.\*

Limiting your child's exposure to tobacco smoke will help your child be healthier.

You can control how much your child is exposed to tobacco smoke. This is one health risk your child can avoid completely!

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

There are two things you can do to limit your child's exposure to tobacco smoke:

1. Make your home a smoke-free zone
2. Limit the amount of tobacco smoke-polluted air your child is exposed to

### Make Your Home Smoke-Free

Take the smoke-free pledge and eliminate smoking in your child's home. First, see who smokes in your home. Who are the smokers in your child's world?

- ✓ You
- ✓ Grandparents or other members of the family
- ✓ Friends
- ✓ Babysitters

Talk to people who smoke and come in your home. Explain why it is so important that your child have clean air to breathe. Have them make a smoke-free pledge to not smoke in your home or around your child. You can print out a smoke-free home pledge and find other helpful

tips at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Web site (<http://www.epa.gov/smokefree/pledge/>). Decide as a family to enforce a no-smoking policy.

Eliminating smoking and smoke exposure is ideal. Having people smoke outside doesn't solve all the problems, but smoking outdoors is much better than smoking indoors. Even though a person may smoke outside, you can still smell smoke on his or her clothes.

If smoking outside is not possible, make one room the only place people can smoke inside. Choose a room with good ventilation—a room where you can open the windows to let in fresh air. Air cleaners do not filter out all the toxins in tobacco smoke. Ceiling fans just spread smoke around. You have to be able to bring in fresh air. Do not allow smoking in rooms where your child sleeps or plays.

### Limiting or Eliminating Your Child's Secondhand Smoke Exposure

Your child's health is at risk whenever your child is around tobacco smoke. Keep your child away from tobacco smoke as much as possible.

Here are some ways to limit or avoid secondhand smoke:

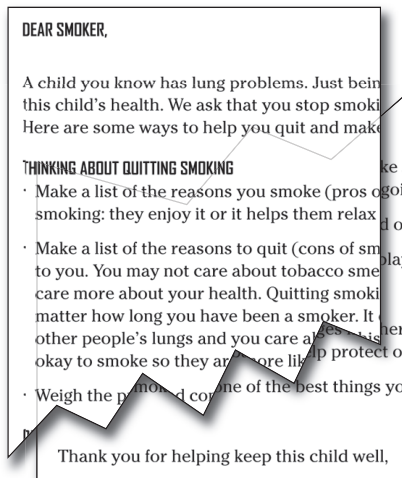
- Sit in the *no smoking* section in public places and restaurants.
- Support efforts in your community to make smoking a problem of the past.
- Let other smokers who may be around your child know how important it is to keep tobacco smoke out of your child's lungs. Tell them it is your child's doctor's order. You may want to give other people who smoke a copy

\*See CF Words to Know Glossary.



of a “Dear Smoker” letter or a prescription for clean air from your CF health care team. Ask your CF health care team for a “Dear Smoker” letter (see sample below) or check the back pocket of the CF Family Education Program modules.

- Ask those who smoke what changes they can make to help limit your child’s exposure. Let them know you appreciate their efforts to not smoke around your child. Smokers may find that by making changes in where they smoke, they end up smoking less. Being able to cut back to help protect others is a great first step to quitting smoking as well!



### QUITTING SMOKING

If you smoke, the best thing you can do for your child, your family, and yourself is to quit smoking. You should also encourage others who smoke to quit. Quitting smoking will have definite health benefits for you, no matter how long you have been a smoker. It can save you money. And it will be good for those around you.

Quitting smoking can be very hard, but it’s not impossible. Many smokers have withdrawal symptoms (such as cravings for nicotine, irritability, headache, difficulty concentrating, restlessness) when they first quit because they are so used

to having nicotine in their system. Without help, this nicotine dependence can make the first weeks especially hard. There are several ways to help avoid or reduce symptoms of nicotine withdrawal. While quitting is not easy, anyone can be successful. There is no “magic bullet” to quit smoking, but there are many resources and support systems you can use to help you.

### TIPS TO QUIT SMOKING

1. Enlist a friend or family member for support.
2. Make a list of the pros and cons of quitting. Do not forget to consider the benefits to yourself (health, money) as well as what keeps you smoking.
3. Think about what barriers or problems make it hard for you to quit. Figure out ways to work around these and talk to others for ideas. Plan ahead if you know you will be around smokers. Ask smokers not to offer you cigarettes or give you any if you ask.
4. Get help in dealing with nicotine dependence.
5. Set a quit date. Share this date with others who can help.
6. Get rid of ashtrays and cigarettes in your home.
7. If you slip and smoke after you quit, don’t consider it a complete failure. Try to learn from the experience. Why did you smoke and what can you do differently next time?
8. Believe in yourself. You CAN quit! Most people try 3 to 4 times to quit before they are finally successful—so keep trying.

### Medicine for Nicotine Dependence

Talk to your doctor about using medicine to help with nicotine dependence. You may want to try nicotine replacement products you can buy without a prescription. Using nicotine replacement products can help a person gradually decrease nicotine use over a

period of time. This gradual withdrawal is easier to handle than stopping suddenly. Several types of prescription medicine can also help a person reduce cravings and side effects from nicotine withdrawal. Any of these products may be needed for a period of 2 to 3 months or longer after quitting (how long varies from person to person). Just like any other medicine, you have to use the product correctly in order for it to help you. Use of any product to help you quit smoking requires you to be motivated to quit. These products are not for everyone. If you have a health problem, such as a heart condition, high blood pressure, thyroid disease, or **diabetes\***, check with your doctor about using nicotine replacement products. Quitting smoking is important to prevent as well as control many health problems.

Check out these self-help resources on the following Web sites:

- <http://www.smokefree.gov>
- [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit\\_smoking](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- <http://www.nci.nih.gov/cancertopics/tobacco> (National Cancer Institute)

All of these Web sites have free material you can read and download to use and share.

You can also call and get free expert help:

- The National Cancer Institute free quit support line at 1-877-44U-QUIT. For help within your state, call 1-800-QUIT NOW.

Help your child demand clean air to breathe. Show your child the value of being a nonsmoker. Never give up on the idea that all the smokers in your child’s life will one day quit, letting everyone breathe easier.