Secondhand Smoke and Lung Cancer: What You Need to Know

There are many dangers of secondhand smoke:
- Secondhand smoke causes heart and lung disease, including lung cancer, the leading cancer killer in America.
- Breathing secondhand smoke is a known cause of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Children who breathe secondhand smoke are also more likely to have lung problems, ear infections and worsened asthma from being around smoke.
- Exposure to secondhand smoke can make existing health conditions such as heart disease and asthma worse.

More on secondhand smoke and lung cancer:
- Secondhand smoke is a risk factor for lung cancer. Approximately 7,330 cases of lung cancer are caused by secondhand smoke each year.
- Data show that patients with non-small cell lung cancer (the most common type of lung cancer) who are exposed to secondhand smoke have worse outcomes, including:
  - Reduced overall survival.
  - Reduced progression-free survival (the length of time during and after treatment when the cancer does not grow or spread).
  - Simply put: lung cancer patients exposed to secondhand smoke are more likely to die than patients not exposed.
- Exposure to secondhand smoke makes it harder for lung cancer patients who smoke to quit smoking. Smoking during lung cancer treatment makes the treatment less effective.

What is still unknown?
- More research is needed to understand the "dose response" relationship, or exactly how much cancer outcomes are worsened by different amounts of secondhand smoke.

What can you do?
- Insist that people don’t smoke in your home or car.
- Avoid group settings where people are smoking.
- Remind the people around you that they can help you through cancer treatment by not smoking around you.
- Join our fight for smokefree air and lung health by becoming a member of our Lung Action Network at Lung.org/action.
- Tell your story about how secondhand smoke has impacted you at LUNGFORCE.org/tell-your-story.

Resources
- If you or a loved one is ready to quit smoking, call our free Lung HelpLine at 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit FreedomFromSmoking.org.
- Learn more about lung cancer at Lung.org/lung-cancer.

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