



MID-JERSEY PEDIATRICS

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CIGARETTE SMOKING

A 1992 national survey indicated that 43% of children 2 months to 11 years of age live in homes with at least one smoker. These children are involuntarily exposed to cigarette smoke. This smoke derives from two sources, second-hand smoke and side-stream smoke. Second-hand smoke is exhaled by the smoker. Side-stream smoke rises off the end of a burning cigarette and accounts for most of the smoke in a room. Side-stream smoke may contain 2-3 times more harmful chemicals than second-hand smoke because it does not pass through a filter.

Passive smoking has a harmful effect on the respiratory health of children. This statement has been documented in study after study. The more smokers in the house, and the more they smoke, the more severe are the child's symptoms.

Children exposed to environmental tobacco smoke have higher rates of lower respiratory tract illness, ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). In addition those children with asthma who live with a smoker have more severe and frequent asthma attacks, are more likely to be admitted to the hospital, and are less likely to outgrow their asthma.

The following conditions are worsened by passive smoking:

Pneumonia	Asthma
Chronic Cough	Ear Infection
Bronchitis	Middle ear fluid requiring tubes
Bronchiolitis	Sinus Infection
SIDS	

How to protect your child

1. GIVE UP SMOKING! (especially if you are pregnant). Sign up for a stop smoking program. Call your physician, your local American Lung Association, or American Cancer Society for information. The National Cancer Institute toll free line is 1 -800-4-CANCER. There are many aids and medications available to assist you in your efforts to stop smoking.
2. Never smoke inside the house. If you are unable to quit, then please restrict your smoking to outside of the house and car. This means all the time, not just when the children are in the room, because the smoke permeates the house. Also when smoking outside wear a special overshirt to protect your clothing from collecting the smoke.
3. Keep in mind, that children who grow up in a household with a smoker are 10x more likely to smoke themselves.