

Passive Smoking

"An hour a day in a room with a smoker is nearly a hundred times more likely to cause lung cancer in a non-smoker than 20 years spent in a building containing asbestos." Sir Richard Doll, 1985

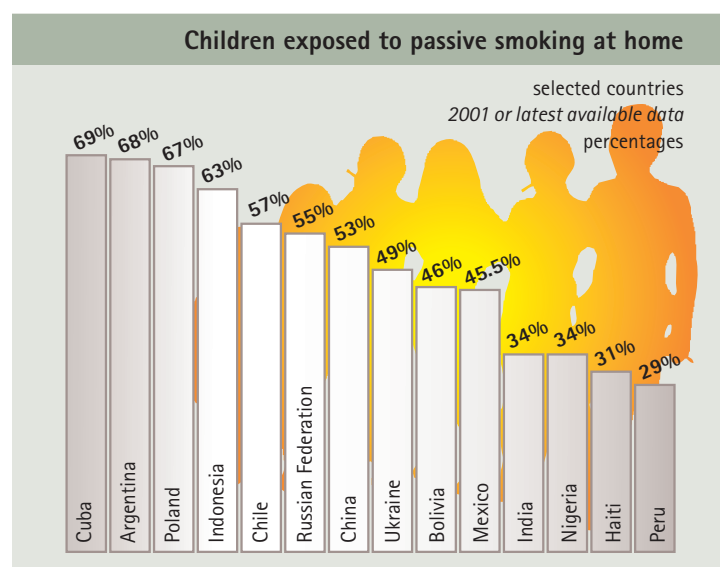
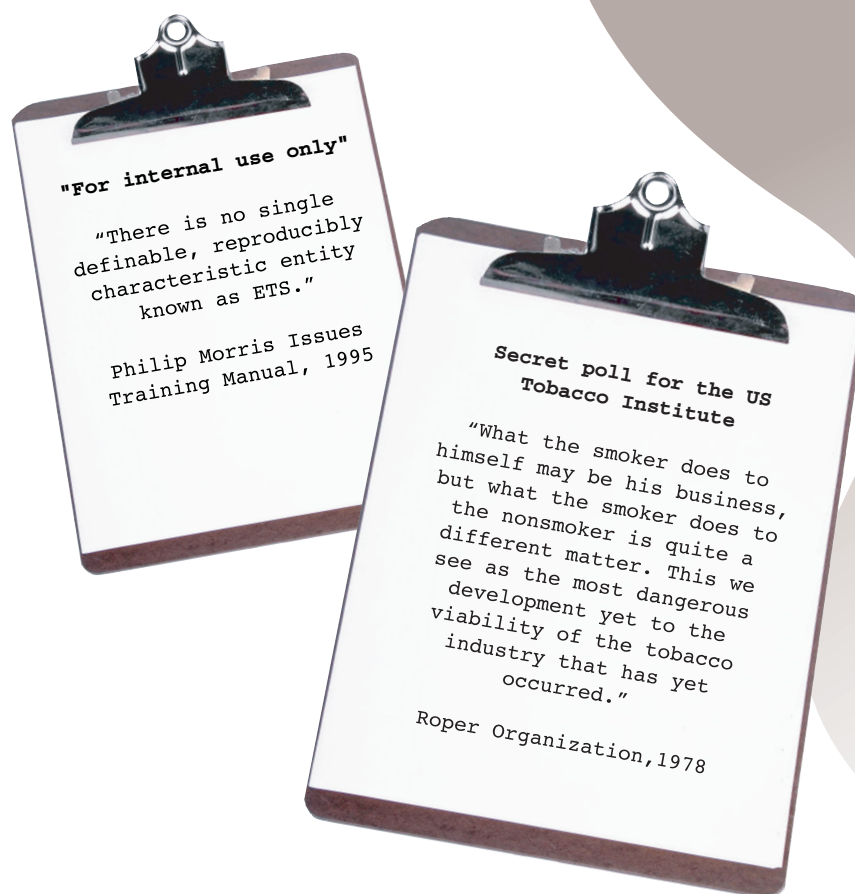
The first conclusive evidence on the danger of passive smoking came from Takeshi Hirayama's study in 1981 on lung cancer in non-smoking Japanese women married to men who smoked. Although the tobacco industry immediately launched a multi-million dollar campaign to discredit the evidence, dozens of further studies have confirmed the link. Research then broadened into other areas and new scientific evidence continues to accumulate.

A complex mixture of chemicals is generated from the burning and smoking of tobacco. As a passive smoker, the non-smoker breathes "sidestream" smoke from the burning tip of the cigarette and "mainstream" smoke that has been inhaled and then exhaled by the smoker.

The risk of lung cancer in non-smokers exposed to passive smoking is increased by between 20 and 30 percent, and the excess risk of heart disease is 23 percent.

Children are at particular risk from adults' smoking. Adverse health effects include pneumonia and bronchitis, coughing and wheezing, worsening of asthma, middle ear disease, and possibly neuro-behavioural impairment and cardiovascular disease in adulthood.

A pregnant woman's exposure to other people's smoking can harm her foetus. The effects are compounded when the child is exposed to passive smoking after birth.



Harm caused by passive smoking

Health effects on adults

- HAIR
 - Smell
- BRAIN AND MENTAL EFFECTS
 - Strokes
- EYES
 - Sting, water and blink more
- NOSE
 - Irritation
- RESPIRATION AND LUNGS
 - Lung cancer
 - Worsening of pre-existing chest problems, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and emphysema
- HEART
 - Harms, clogs weakens arteries
 - Heart attack, angina
- UTERUS
 - Low birthweight or small for gestational age
 - Cot death or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) after birth
- BURNS
 - From fires caused by tobacco

Harm caused by passive smoking

Health effects on children

- HAIR
 - Smell
- BRAIN
 - Possible association with brain tumours and long-term mental effects
- EYES
 - Sting, water and blink more
- EARS
 - Middle ear infections (chronic otitis media)
- RESPIRATION AND LUNGS
 - Respiratory infections (including bronchitis and pneumonia)
 - Asthma induction and exacerbation
 - Chronic respiratory symptoms (wheezing, cough, breathlessness)
 - Decreased lung function
- HEART
 - Deleterious effects on oxygen, arteries
 - Increased nicotine receptors
- BLOOD
 - Possible association with lymphoma
- BURNS
 - From fires caused by tobacco
- ROLE MODEL
 - Greater likelihood of becoming a smoker as a teenager

Numbers affected by passive smoking in the USA

annual 1990s

Lung cancer 3,000
Ischaemic heart disease 35,000 to 62,000

Infants and children

Low birthweight 9,700 to 18,600
Cot death (SIDS) 1,900 to 2,700
Bronchitis or pneumonia in infants 150,000 to 300,000

Respiratory effects in children

Middle ear infection 700,000 to 1,600,000
Asthma induction (new cases) 8,000 to 26,000
Asthma exacerbation 400,000 to 1,000,000