

Effects of Secondhand Smoke

By Amy Bentley



Dr. Sunil P. Kamath
CHOC Pulmonary and
Respiratory Specialist

Dr. Kamath is a specialist in the area of pulmonary medicine, the branch of medicine that deals with the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of lung diseases. Dr. Kamath is the medical director of respiratory, pulmonary and blood gas services at CHOC.

He served his pediatrics residency at Children's Hospital Los Angeles and his internship in pathology at the St. Louis University School of Medicine, as well as a pediatric pulmonology fellowship at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Dr. Kamath's philosophy of care: "I like working with patients and their families to improve their health and quality of life."

EDUCATION:

St. Louis University School of Medicine

BOARD CERTIFICATIONS:

Pediatrics
Pediatric Pulmonology

Firsthand smoke comes from the toxins of cigarettes being inhaled directly. Secondhand smoke is breathed indirectly. Thirdhand smoke is inhaled from clothing, draperies, furniture, carpets and other things in the environment that absorb smoke. "There are some theories that thirdhand smoke can be just as dangerous or more dangerous than secondhand smoke because it interacts with chemicals we use to clean our clothes," says Dr. Sunil P. Kamath, CHOC pulmonary and respiratory specialist.

HOW IT HURTS KIDS

"If kids are around smokers and exposed to second- or thirdhand smoke, they have increased incidents of asthma, ear infections and sinus infections. The other big thing is there is a direct correlation between smoke exposure and SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)," says Dr. Kamath. "The smoke and



2.5 million

OF NONSMOKERS WHO HAVE DIED FROM HEALTH PROBLEMS CAUSED BY EXPOSURE TO SECONDHAND SMOKE, SINCE 1964

toxins are inhaled into the child's lungs and respiratory tract and have a lot of negative effects on the developing lung and on the immune system" he says.

MINIMIZING EXPOSURE AT HOME

"The best thing for smokers would be to quit smoking for their own health benefit and for their children and the people around them," advises Dr. Kamath. "At a minimum, if people are going to smoke, they should smoke outside, away from the house and away from any ventilation system. We always recommend that smokers wear a smoking jacket or robe and when they are done, they leave that article of clothing outside and wash their hands and face before interacting with anyone."



58 million

OF NONSMOKERS IN THE U.S. EXPOSED TO SECONDHAND SMOKE IN 2011-2012

40%

% OF KIDS AGES 3-11 IN THE U.S. WHO WERE EXPOSED TO SECONDHAND SMOKE REGULARLY IN 2011-2012



SOURCES FOR STATS 1, 2 AND 3 - WWW.CDC.GOV