

PreventionWorksAR.org

THIRDHAND SMOKE:

Don't bring it into your house!



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We all know that smoking is dangerous to our health. We also know that secondhand smoke is dangerous for others around us. Both smoking and secondhand smoke can lead to heart disease, cancer and breathing problems. Now, there is a new term called “thirdhand smoke.” Allowing thirdhand smoke in your home or car can be toxic to your family and loved ones.

What is thirdhand smoke?

Thirdhand smoke is the name for the dangerous substances left behind after smoking. Tobacco smoke contains a lot of toxic gasses and particles. These substances stick onto walls, floors and surfaces, as well as our skin and clothing. This is more dangerous for small children, because they are much closer to floors, carpets and tables than adults. In fact, some doctors believe thirdhand smoke is more dangerous than secondhand smoke. That’s because it stays for a long time after smoking.

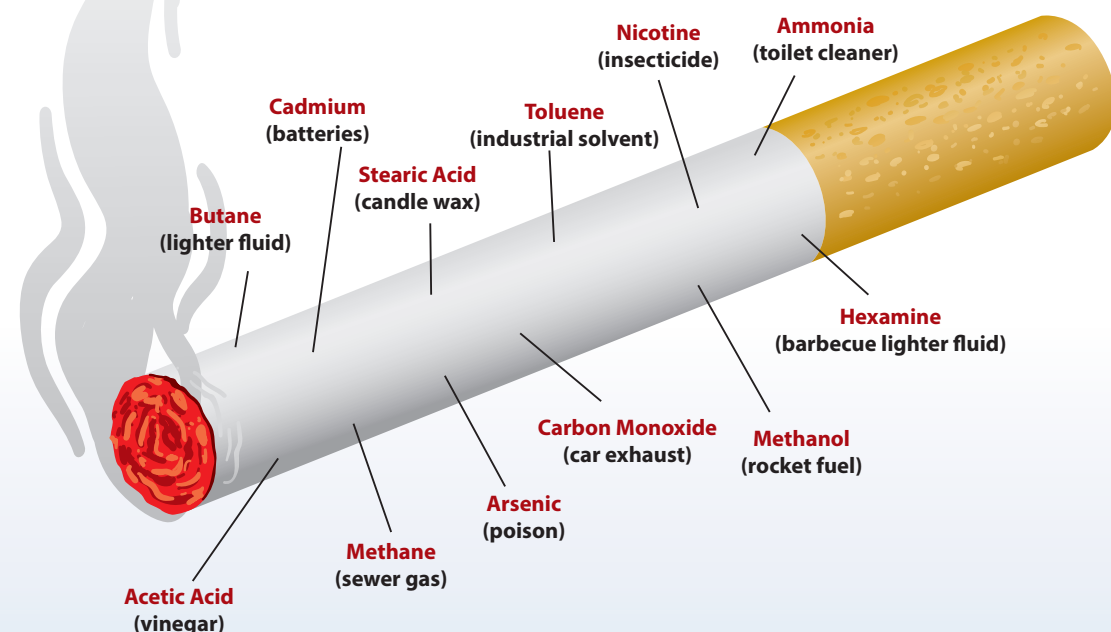
Why is it dangerous?

Doctors have found thirdhand smoke can be harmful to children. It can lead to asthma, ear infections and even sudden infant death (SIDS). However, thirdhand smoke also harms adults. Service workers, like waiters and hotel employees who work in smoking areas, are especially at risk. Pregnant women should also avoid thirdhand smoke, because it can lead to pregnancy problems and lung damage in an unborn child.

How do I stop it?

There is no safe amount of tobacco smoke. Even the smallest amount of smoke is dangerous. The best way to avoid thirdhand smoke is to live smoke-free. Do not allow smoking in your house or car. If you do smoke outside, wear an extra layer of clothing and leave it outside. Wash your hands and face to get the smoke off your skin. Always keep your children away from smoking areas.

Dangerous Chemicals in Cigarettes



What’s the difference?

Secondhand smoke refers to the smoke coming out of a burning cigarette or the smoke exhaled by a person who is smoking. This is also known as passive smoking and is present when a person is actively smoking. Arkansas law prohibits smoking in a motor vehicle when children under the age of 14 are present.

Thirdhand smoke refers to the contamination left behind by the cigarette smoke that gets absorbed onto the surface of other materials such as walls, clothes and floors, and is slowly released back into the air. A person doesn’t have to be actively smoking for someone to be exposed to thirdhand smoke.



Myths about thirdhand smoke

- **Airing out rooms.** No amount of fresh air can remove the smoke from walls and carpets in a room.
- **Smoking with open windows.** Cigarette smoke gets onto surfaces, even if the window is open.
- **Smoking in your home or car when kids aren’t there.** Thirdhand smoke stays for a long time after you are done smoking.
- **Smoking in only one room of the house.** Smoke will carry into other rooms and stay there for a long time.
- **Using fans or an air conditioner.** This might help the smell, but the dangerous smoke will still be left behind in the room or car.

See back page for more information on the dangers of smoking and how to quit.

For more information to quit smoking call or visit:

- 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) — helpline to quit smoking (English)
- 1-855-DÉJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569) — helpline to quit smoking (Spanish)
- cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips — for tips from former smokers
- smokefree.gov (English or Spanish) — a website that offers free tools and information to quit smoking and free smartphone apps and texting service to quit smoking
- women.smokefree.gov/pregnancy-motherhood.aspx — website providing information to assist women in quitting smoking and staying tobacco-free
- teen.smokefree.gov — website providing information to assist teens on quitting smoking and staying tobacco-free
- ucanquit2.org — website sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense for military personnel and their families
- <http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programsServices/tobaccoprevent/Pages/TobaccoQuitline.aspx> — resources to quit smoking
- www.stampoutsmoking.com — resources to quit smoking
- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/languages/quittingsmoking.html> — informational tools to quit smoking in other languages

