

FACT SHEET: TOBACCO AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH

1. Second hand smoke exposure can result in: low birth weight, reduced head circumference at birth, increased incidence of SIDS (3 to 6 times), meningococcal infections, acute lower airway infections (0–3 years), middle ear disease, wheeze (0–5 years), frequent respiratory symptoms (5–16 years), persistent reduced lung function, syncytial virus bronchiolitis and pulmonary tuberculosis.
2. Possible associations of passive smoking in children include reduced and disturbed intra-uterine lung growth, increased incidence of perinatal complications, neurodevelopmental and behavioural problems and childhood cancer.
3. Children exposed to SHS have:
 - 200-300% greater risk for lower respiratory diseases, including bronchitis.
 - 20% increase in asthma induction and exacerbation.
 - 62% greater risk of otitis media.
 - Double risk of sudden infant death (cot death).
4. In children's lungs, tobacco smoke induces inflammation reaction, increased susceptibility to allergic sensitisation and mutagenesis.
5. Prenatal exposure to maternal smoking can lead to smaller calibre airways, 20% reduction in forced expired flows in preterm infants and reduced respiratory compliance among girls.
6. Infant exposure to cigarette smoke leads to increased airway resistance and reduced forced expiratory flow.
7. Surveys conducted in households (n= 1306) in Kerala found that over 35% (n=464) of women had a husband who smoked. In these households, 75% of women reported that they and their children were exposed to SHS smoke at home. Over three-quarters of women surveyed reported that they had no rules in their home about smoking.
8. Exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS) is associated with 33% higher risk of childhood asthma induction, independent of age, atopy history, and child's smoking.
9. Maternal smoking may harm children's digestive tract function, and is associated with increased incidence of infant colic.
10. Maternal smoking has long-term negative reprogramming effect on CV responsiveness. It is unknown if this predicts future hypertension.

