VOLUME 7, NUMBER 8

Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#63 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

How to Make Your Home Smoke-Free

And why now is the time to do it

Available in Spanish, Chinese and other languages: Call 311 or visit nyc.gov

NYC Health

Why have a smoke-free home?

Second-hand smoke is very harmful to health.

- Non-smokers who live with second-hand smoke are more likely to get sick or die from serious illness such as cancer and heart disease.
- Women who live with second-hand smoke are more likely to have low-birthweight babies, pre-term delivery, and miscarriage.
- Even cats and dogs whose owners smoke have higher rates of cancer!

Second-hand smoke is especially bad for children. When parents smoke …



- Babies are more likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Children have more illnesses, including ear infections and asthma.
- Teens are more likely to become smokers themselves.

Smoking damages your home and your property

- Cigarette smoke permanently damages furniture, curtains, rugs, paint, clothing, bedding, books, art and other items.
- Cigarettes can leave burn marks on furniture and rugs.
- Smoking is a leading cause of home fires.
- Insurance rates are often higher. (Check with your insurance company about lower rates for smoke-free homes.)

More and more families have rules against smoking

Even smokers are making their homes smoke-free.

- The best way to protect your family from second-hand smoke is to quit smoking, but even smokers can protect those around them.
- 2 out of 3 New York City adults — including a third of the city's smokers — have rules against smoking in their homes.

There are many advantages.

- A smoke-free home is *safer and healthier.*
- A smoke-free home *smells better.*
- A smoke-free home is *easier to clean.*
- A smoke-free home is *easier to sell.*
- A smoke-free home is *more pleasant* to guests – most people hate to be around second-hand smoke even for a little while.
- Having a smoke-free home makes it easier to quit smoking.

How to make your home smoke-free

Tell everyone – family, caregivers and guests.



- Tell your friends and family you don't allow smoking in your home.
- Post a "Smoke-Free Home" sign on your door. It will spare you having to tell people one-at-a-time.
- Have all the smokers you live with sign a pledge to keep your home smoke-free.
- Remove ashtrays, lighters and matches from your home.
- Have low-calorie or sugar-free gum or candy available as an alternative to smoking. Or try cutting up fresh fruit and raw vegetables for people to snack on.
- Be polite but firm. If people must smoke, insist that they do it outside.
- Thank people for helping keep your home smoke-free.
- Let them know you're rejecting the *smoke,* not the smoker.
- It may take hard work and a little time to get everyone to agree. Don't give up – you're doing something important!

Make your *whole home* smoke-free (not just a couple of rooms).

- Moving to another room, opening a window, or using a fan or air filter does NOT protect people.
- Keep your home smoke-free even when no one else is around. Second-hand smoke lingers long after a cigarette is put out.

Make your car smoke-free, too

- Set a "no smoking" policy in your car as well as your home. (Many people post signs.)
- Second-hand smoke is harmful in any enclosed space.
- Opening the car's windows or vents doesn't protect people.
- Remove the car's cigarette lighter and ashtray.
- Smoking reduces a car's resale value.



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More Information

- **New York City Health Department:**
  - **Visit nyc.gov/nycquits or call 311 for free help to stop smoking.**
  - **Health Bulletins: nyc.gov/health or call 311 and ask for # 46: Still Smoking?**
- **Roswell Park Cancer Institute: www.smokefreehome.org**
- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Smoke-Free Homes and Cars Program: www.epa.gov/smokefree**
- **Smoke Free Homes Project: www.kidslivesmokefree.org**
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/tobacco**

CALL 311

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CALL 311 **For Non-Emergency New York City Services**
Telephone Interpretation in More Than 170 Languages

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