

Second Hand Smoke and Children's Health

A Summary of Research Findings

From: Consultation Report. International Consultation on Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) and Child Health. Tobacco Free Initiative, World Health Organization, June, 1999, p. 17

Report ¹	Lower respiratory tract infections ²	Middle ear disease	Chronic respiratory symptoms	Asthma	Lung function	Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
United States Surgeon General (1986)	More frequent in children whose parents smoke	Suggestive evidence that middle ear effusion ³ is more common in children whose parents smoke	More frequent in children whose parents smoke	Not reviewed	Small decrements in children whose parents smoke	Not reviewed
United States Environmental Protection Agency (1992)	ETS is causally associated with increased risk	ETS is causally associated with increased prevalence of middle ear effusion	ETS is causally associated with increased prevalence	ETS is causally associated with additional episodes and increased severity of symptoms in asthmatic children; suggestive evidence that ETS causes new cases of asthma	ETS is causally associated with small reductions	Strong evidence that maternal smoking increases the risk of SIDS. Data inadequate to assess specific role of ETS
California Environmental Protection Agency (1997) ⁴	ETS is causally associated	ETS is causally associated	ETS is causally associated	ETS is causally associated with asthma exacerbation and induction	Suggestive evidence of causal association with ETS	ETS is causally associated
Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (1997) ⁵	ETS has cause-and-effect relationship	Causal link between ETS and middle ear effusion	Not reviewed	Causal relationship between ETS and asthma	Association with ETS exposure	Causal association with ETS
United Kingdom Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health (1998)	ETS is a cause	Parental smoking causes acute and chronic middle ear disease	Convincing evidence that parental smoking increases risk	ETS is a cause of asthma attacks	Not reviewed	ETS has cause-and-effect association

¹ See bibliography in report for details of source.

² In infants and very young children.

³ i.e., fluid in the middle ear, or "glue ear".

⁴ The report also concluded that exposure of pregnant nonsmokers to ETS is causally associated with reduced foetal growth and that there is suggestive evidence that ETS is causally associated with adverse impacts on cognition and behaviour.

⁵ The report also concluded that there is suggestive evidence that exposure of pregnant nonsmokers to ETS causes reduced foetal growth.