

## What can you do?

Follow these simple steps to keep everyone healthy and safe.

- ◆ If you smoke, quit. Talk to your doctor about free resources and programs in your area.
- ◆ Avoid smoking in your house or car or in areas where your family spends a lot of time.
- ◆ Don't allow family or visitors to smoke in your home or car.
- ◆ Hire only nonsmoking babysitters and care providers.

### Replace and repair to reduce smoke residue.

Thirdhand smoke cannot be completely eliminated. In homes where regular smoking has occurred, the following may be needed to reduce thirdhand smoke residue:

- ◆ Replace carpets
- ◆ Replace furniture
- ◆ Replace bedding
- ◆ Replace countertops
- ◆ Replace wallboards/drywall

## Free help to quit smoking

**KICK / T**  
California

1-800-300-8086

[kickitca.org](http://kickitca.org)

### Sources

1. California Department of Public Health. California Tobacco Control Program. 2017. *Thirdhand Smoke*.
2. Smith, Caitlin O., 'Thirdhand smoke' exposure another threat to children, AAP News, American Academy of Pediatrics. 2009: 30;8
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. How Does Smoking During Pregnancy Harm My Health and My Baby? Updated 2016. [www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/tobaccousepregnancy/](http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/tobaccousepregnancy/) [Accessed October 2016]
4. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. *Secondhand (and Third-Hand) Smoke May Be Making Your Pet Sick*. November 2016. [www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm530220.htm](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm530220.htm) [Accessed May 2017]

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# Thirdhand Smoke

Learn how you can protect yourself and your family from this unseen danger.



## What is thirdhand smoke?

If you've ever smelled smoke on a smoker's hair or clothes, or smelled smoke in a room where no one is smoking, you've experienced thirdhand smoke. It is a toxic residue that is left on surfaces long after the cigarette smoke is gone. It can also come from hookah and electronic cigarettes.

The dangerous chemicals that are found in tobacco smoke have been shown to remain on all indoor surfaces including counter tops, walls, furniture, toys, and even on our skin and hair.<sup>1</sup>

**“Cigarettes’ lingering after-effects are just as dangerous to children as secondhand smoke.”<sup>2</sup>**

*American Academy of Pediatrics*

## Why is it dangerous?

- ◆ Thirdhand smoke contains high levels of nicotine and cancer-causing chemicals.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ Some of the chemicals in thirdhand smoke are different from those found in fresh smoke because it changes over time and becomes even more toxic.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ Exposure to thirdhand smoke damages genetic material (DNA), and increases the risk for short- and long-term health problems including asthma and cancer.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ Common cleaning methods such as vacuuming, wiping surfaces, and airing out rooms do not completely remove thirdhand smoke.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ Layers of smoke residue can build up over time on surfaces and in household dust where it can remain for years.<sup>1</sup>



## Who is most at risk?

### Babies & children

- ◆ They are closer to most of the contaminated surfaces because they are crawling on rugs and furniture.
- ◆ The nicotine and chemicals in thirdhand smoke can be absorbed through the skin or inhaled.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ Infants and toddlers can swallow smoke residue when teething or playing with contaminated objects.<sup>1</sup>

### Pregnant people

- ◆ Nicotine is a health danger for pregnant people. It can damage a developing baby's brain and lungs.<sup>3</sup>

### Your pets

- ◆ Pets spend most of their time on the floor or on furniture, where thirdhand smoke settles.
- ◆ The smoke also settles on animal fur (or feathers). When pets groom themselves they can ingest the toxic chemicals from the smoke.<sup>4</sup>

**You can protect yourself, your family, and your pets by keeping your home and car tobacco free.**