

Environmental Tobacco Smoke and Asthma

Cigarette smoke contains many toxic chemicals and irritants. Children exposed to tobacco smoke have increased asthma exacerbations and other problems, including lower respiratory infections and middle ear infections. Infants have an increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome. Simply “smoking outside” is not enough to limit the harm to children from tobacco smoke. Remember that smoke settles in clothes, hair, car upholstery, and furniture. Once a parent or a caregiver acknowledges that he/she smokes, the provider should consider writing a referral for a smoking cessation or a community support program.

Additional History Questions to Supplement the History Form:

- Who in the family smokes cigarettes?
How many cigarettes per day?
Does he/she (they) smoke in the house? _____
Outside? _____ Both inside and outside? _____ In the car? _____
- Does anyone who spends time at your house smoke (friends, neighbors, relatives)?
- Have you established a smoking ban or no smoking policy in the household?
- Does anyone smoke in childcare settings where the child stays?
- Describe the circumstances when your child may be exposed to smoke?

Possible Interventions:

- **Keep your home and car smoke-free**
- **Seek support to quit smoking, consider aids such as nicotine gum, patch, and medication from your doctor to help you in quitting**
- **Choose smoke-free childcare and social settings**
- Seek smoke-free environments in restaurants, theaters, and hotel rooms
- If you choose to smoke, do not smoke near your child

Follow-Up / Notes: