

Second Hand Smoke and your Dog

In spite of what cigarette companies say, we all know it. Smoking is a serious health problem. Some people consider it child abuse to smoke in the same room as children. Second hand smoke can be as deadly if not more so than actually puffing on a cigarette. People, especially children, have little say in the matter. Although laws and restrictions continue to improve the situation, there are still problems. There are also areas where research has yet to extend beyond the surface. Of particular concern to dog owners is the issue of second hand smoke and its impact on their pet.

Can secondhand smoke affect your favorite canine? This is a matter under investigation. The first study dates from 1992. More recently, others have begun to accumulate data. You, as a pet owner, should take to heart the questions these studies raise. Your dog has no choice but to breathe in the same air as you. When you omit toxic chemicals into your environment, you are forcing the same materials into the lungs of your dog.

While it is true dogs are closer to the ground than taller living beings, this will not allow them to escape the smoke of cigarettes or cigars. While the air around them may not have as high a rate of toxicity, the carpet they lie in may actually have higher levels. As anyone who smokes or knows smokers is aware, the odor clings to carpets, rugs, clothing and the physical space. Your dog lies on the carpet. He or she gets to breathe in all the smoke and its components after it sinks down and settles there.

Dogs may actually suffer from a triple whammy. They breathe in second-hand smoke directly as they sit, lie or walk beside their smoking person. They obtain further toxins when they absorb the smoke and chemicals from chairs, furniture, carpets and other materials conducive to acting like a sponge. Dogs also may suffer because of a habit. Dogs clean themselves. As a result, they ingest the chemical toxins. Dogs with owners who smoke are at a heightened risk for several health problems. These include

1 Respiratory infections

2 Asthma

3 Lymphoma

4 Cancers of various types. For some long-muzzled dogs, nasal cancer is of serious concern. The incidence rate jumps by 60% if the dogs live with a smoker.

Vet studies are underway to research the links between poor dog health and second hand smoke. The anecdotal evidence, however, seems to indicate there is a link. Dogs who belong to owners who smoke, are more prone to certain illnesses.

Moreover, cancer does not seem to care about the shape of a dog's nose. While Greyhounds, Collies and German Shepherds with their long noses, may be prone to nasal cancer, short muzzled dogs are not free from cancers caused by passive smoke. Dogs like pugs and bulldogs may actually be at high risk. They have less effective means of filtering out the toxic chemicals.

If you put together the anecdotal and the medical evidence, the result is clear. Smoking is bad for both you and your pet. If you want to help your pet live a long healthy life, do this. Stop smoking now. If you cannot, take it outside and away from your dog.

Article provided by Joe Cooper of www.ohmydogsupplies.com