

Hazards of Secondhand Smoke

Many international studies and studies done by School of Public Health and Department of Community Medicine, HKU LKS Faculty of Medicine have proved that secondhand smoke (SHS) can cause lung cancer and heart diseases. SHS mainly consists of main stream smoke and side stream smoke, while side stream smoke is more poisonous than main stream smoke. In a research studying the hazards of SHS to smokers with 9,923 HK smoking police officers participated, it was found that the higher the amount of SHS exposure, the more likely that a smoker develops acute and chronic respiratory symptoms, and utilises health care resources. The medical expenses relating to smoking is huge, and therefore any proposal related to smoking facilities should carefully consider the findings of the study.

Another research studying deaths caused by SHS showed that SHS is a risk factor to heart diseases, chronic lung diseases and cancer. The more the number of smokers around one, the higher the chance one dies of stroke and heart diseases. The total economic loss in relation to smoking and secondhand smoking is over \$5.3 billion per year. To protect anyone from the hazards of smoking, the whole community should take actions to stop smoking.

HKU offers smoking cessation counseling services and studies. Interested parties can call 6752 6266 or 2819 2697 for further details.