

## How Cigarettes and Smoking Affect Your Pet's Health

We all know that second hand smoke can affect the health and well-being of our fellow humans. Many people don't realize that it can also be harmful to our pets as well, namely dogs, cats and birds. If you can't quit, at least do not smoke in your home if there are pets that live with you.

### How pets can be exposed

- By ingestion of cigarette or cigar butts which contain toxins
- By drinking water that contains cigarette or cigar butts
- By breathing second hand smoke
- By ingestion of nicotine replacement gum and patches

### Health Effects

- Breathing problems and asthmatic-like symptoms in cats and dogs
- Salivation
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Cardiac abnormalities
- Respiratory difficulties and respiratory paralysis
- Feline lymphoma in cats
- Lung cancer in dogs
- Nasal cancer in dogs
- Death

### Research

- A 2002 Tufts University study linked second-hand smoke to cancer in cats. The study found that cats living with smokers are twice as likely to develop malignant lymphoma—the most common feline cancer—as those in non-smoking households. Lymphoma kills 3 out of 4 afflicted cats within 12 months.

One reason cats are so vulnerable to the carcinogens in tobacco smoke is they are meticulous groomers. Daily grooming over a long period of time can expose their delicate oral tissues to hazardous amounts of carcinogens.

- A 2007 University of Minnesota study showed that cats who live with smokers have nicotine and other toxins in their urine.
- A 2007 Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine study linked second-hand smoke to oral cancer in cats (squamous cell carcinoma.) Cats living with more than one smoker and cats exposed to environmental tobacco smoke for longer than five years had even higher rates of this cancer.
- A 1998 Colorado State University study, published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, found a higher incidence of nasal tumors and cancer of the sinus in dogs living in a home with smokers, compared to those living in a smoke-free environment. The nasal/sinus tumors were specifically found among the long-nosed breeds such as retrievers and German shepherds. Unfortunately, dogs with nasal cancer do not usually survive more than one year.
- The same study showed higher lung cancer rates in short to medium nosed dogs who live with smokers, such as boxers and bulldogs. Their shorter nasal passages made it easier for cancer-causing particles to reach the lungs.
- Another study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology found that dogs in smoking households have a 60 percent greater risk of lung cancer.