



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Snuff Out Smoking*

*State Smoking Restrictions for Private-Sector Worksites, Restaurants, and Bars — United States, 2004 and 2007*

Recorded: May 20, 2008; posted: May 29, 2008

*[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.*

[Susan Laird] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm Susan Laird, filling in for your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Many people in the United States smoke without ever lighting up. Smoke is dangerous whether you inhale it from a cigarette or breathe it from the air where others around you are smoking. Secondhand smoke contains more than 50 chemicals that can cause cancer; it can also cause heart disease. Many states have outlawed smoking in public places, such as worksites, restaurants, and bars. However, several states still have no restrictions on smoking.

Dr. Matthew McKenna is with CDC's Office on Smoking and Health. He's joining us today to discuss the dangers of secondhand smoke. Welcome to the show, Dr. McKenna.

[Dr. McKenna] Thanks for having me.

[Susan Laird] Dr. McKenna, how are people affected by secondhand smoke?

[Dr. McKenna] Well, the science has become very clear that secondhand smoke causes a wide range of diseases, but the ones that are most prominent are lung cancer, heart disease, as well as respiratory disease.

[Susan Laird] I understand that health effects are even worse for children.

[Dr. McKenna] Yes. That's true. The range of health effects in children are much greater, including greater number of ear infections, asthma. And children have a more difficult time protecting themselves from secondhand smoke than adults — getting away from situations that put them at risk.

[Susan Laird] What is CDC's Office on Smoking and Health doing to protect the public from secondhand smoke exposure?

[Dr. McKenna] CDC works very closely with its public health partners and state health departments, as well as other federal agencies, to promote things that protect people from secondhand smoke, such as bans on smoking in public places, as well as encouraging parents to adopt smoke-free home policies to help protect their children.

[Susan Laird] Several states now have restrictions on smoking in public places. Has that been effective?

[Dr. McKenna] It's become very clear that this is one of the most effective public health interventions available. With the implementation of bans on smoking in public places implemented through laws or ordinances, there are rapid decreases, both in the measurement of chemicals in people who are nonsmokers in those communities, as well as decreases in health effects, such as heart disease rates.

[Susan Laird] I understand a lot of businesses that serve the public — especially restaurants — feel that their business will suffer.

[Dr. McKenna] Yeah. There's a lot of concern. Many owners of establishments that serve people where they let them smoke are concerned that smokers will leave their establishment and they'll lose business. But the objective evidence is very clear that there is no impact. In fact, what tends to happen is people who didn't frequent those establishments because there was secondhand smoke around, now come in more frequently, and there has very little impact on actual income for those establishments.

[Susan Laird] That's good to know. What can our listeners do to decrease their exposure to secondhand smoke?

[Dr. McKenna] Well, the first thing they can do is, in their own homes, establish a smoke-free policy for their home — make sure their home is smoke-free. Also in their community, to pay attention to what establishments are - ban smoking altogether. The only way to prevent exposure to secondhand smoke is to be somewhere where no one smokes, and the only way to achieve that is to have an outright ban. Partitioning rooms or having separate smoking areas are not sufficient. So people need to pay attention that they're frequenting those sorts of places. In a broader way, they can also, in their own communities, try to support organizations that are trying to get the kind of laws passed for general banning of smoking in public places.

[Susan Laird] Where can listeners go for more information on the dangers of secondhand smoke?

[Dr. McKenna] I would recommend going to [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco). For those who are interested in quitting, there is a toll-free number, 1-800-QUIT-NOW, that they can call and get more information.

[Susan Laird] Dr. McKenna, thanks for sharing this information with our listeners today.

[Dr. McKenna] It's my pleasure.

[Susan Laird] That's it for this week's show. Be sure and join us next week. Until then, be well. This is Susan Laird for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.