How Smoking Can Increase Your Child’s Risk of Asthma

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Secondhand Smoke

Parents who smoke place their children at risk for developing asthma. The effects of secondhand smoke are damaging to children and can also have harmful effects on an unborn child. Even if the mother does not smoke, being around secondhand smoke can still increase her unborn child’s risk of developing asthma. Nearly forty percent of children with asthma live with a parent who smokes and is likely to be regularly exposed to secondhand smoke. Although smoking can be a very difficult habit to give up, it is important to understand the effects that it may have on your children.

How Smoking Affects Younger Children

Younger children and babies are more susceptible to developing asthma and other diseases from secondhand smoke because their lungs are smaller and still in the developmental stage. In addition, they also breathe at a faster rate than adults, which means that they will inhale more of the secondhand smoke. In addition, their immune systems are weaker and less developed. In addition to asthma, unborn children who are heavily exposed to secondhand smoke may also be born with weaker lungs and immune systems. Physicians believe that secondhand smoke is responsible for 13% of the asthma cases that they observe in children.

Recognizing the Symptoms of Asthma

Some of the symptoms that are commonly displayed in children with asthma include the following:

- Frequent coughing throughout the year.
- Shortness of breath accompanied by chest congestion or chest pains.
- Trouble breathing while engaging in physical activities.
- A wheezing sound when the child is sleeping or exhaling.

If you recognize any of the above symptoms, it is important to seek medical attention immediately. Failure to do so may cause the symptoms to worsen until your child experiences an asthma attack. This is a medical emergency that requires immediate attention.

Providing a Smoke-Free Environment for Your Child

If you live with a young child, a healthier environment can be created by minimizing their exposure to secondhand smoke. This can be done with relatively minimal effort by avoiding smoking around your child, including indoors or in the car when they are in your presence. These steps will go a long way to minimizing your child’s risk of developing asthma and help create a healthier living atmosphere for them.

If you are planning on becoming pregnant, it is a good idea to consider quitting since the effects on an unborn child can be very harmful. If this is something that you are concerned about, a good place to start seeking advice

is with your family physician. They may be able to provide you with tips on quitting smoking or provide information about the different over-the-counter products that can assist you.