

Children and Tobacco

Tobacco is dangerous for children!

Their young bodies and brains are still developing. The nicotine and chemicals in tobacco can hurt them.



These are some health problems children might have if they use tobacco:

- **Slow learning**
- **Sick more often**
- **Tooth decay and tooth loss**
- **Slows growth of the lungs**
- **Trigger asthma attacks**
- **More ear infections**
- **Constant cough**

Children can get hooked on cigarettes and chewing tobacco, just like adults.

The earlier a person starts using tobacco, the more likely she/he is to become hooked on nicotine. *Almost 90 percent of tobacco users begin at or before age 18.*



Children and Tobacco

Tobacco use puts children at risk for deadly illnesses:

- *Cancer*
- *Heart disease and stroke*
- *Emphysema*
- *Asthma attacks*

If you know your child is using tobacco, tell them you are worried about their use, and encourage them to stop.

Find out what would help your child to quit and support them in quitting. Seek help if you cannot help your child to quit. Talk to your child's doctor about their tobacco use.

Quitting yourself sets a good example and can help your child quit.

A tobacco-free home makes children less likely to use tobacco, even if their parents use. By not allowing anyone to smoke or chew in the home, parents make using tobacco harder for their children and make a powerful statement that they believe tobacco use is bad.

Remember: **NEVER, EVER** give cigarettes or chew to a child. There is no safe amount of tobacco use. Keep your child free from tobacco.

Sources: www.tobaccofreekids.org,
(HHS, *Preventing Tobacco Use among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General, 1994.*)

Patient Education • Cont/Prep • HEC approval 1/04