

The Daily Dose

Faces from the frontlines of Oregon's Health Care Crisis



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New Report Reveals: Harmful secondhand tobacco smoke can be detected in kids as young as 11

Environmental tobacco smoke has an adverse effect on children as young as 11 years, according to new evidence reported in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*.

The findings add to the mounting evidence of the harmful health consequences of secondhand smoke exposure in children.

“Our study shows that exposure to secondhand smoke can harm the function of the arteries in children, just as other research groups have found that secondhand smoke harms the function of the arteries in adults,” said Katariina Kallio, M.D., lead author of the study and research fellow at the Research Centre of Applied and Preventive Cardiovascular Medicine at the University of Turku in Turku, Finland.

“Even a little exposure to smoke at home or in the public environment can be harmful to the cardiovascular system of healthy schoolchildren,” Kallio said.

Children participating in this study were initially enrolled as infants in the randomized, prospective atherosclerosis prevention trial Special Turku Coronary Risk Factor Intervention Project (STRIP). Researchers studied children’s responses to environmental tobacco smoke at ages 8 through 11.

Researchers assessed arterial health and objectively measured exposure to environmental smoke, instead of self-reported smoking at home by parents.

Blood levels of the substance cotinine were measured annually in children between 8 and 11 years old. Cotinine is a biomarker for nicotine that’s highly sensitive and specific, reflecting exposure to tobacco smoke during the past several days.

Message to the Legislature:

Pass SJR 4 to give voters a chance to provide health care for all kids with an increase in tobacco taxes.

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to our health care crisis.

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