



**NEWS RELEASE**  
For Immediate Release  
April 26, 2024

**Contact:** Tanya Payyappilly, MD, MPH  
Chief Executive Officer  
(408) 998-5865  
[tanya@lungsrus.org](mailto:tanya@lungsrus.org)

## **Have you heard about Thirdhand Smoke?**

SAN JOSE, CA April 26, 2024 – Secondhand smoke exposure occurs when people breathe in smoke/vapor from tobacco products like cigarettes, cigars, hookahs, and e-cigarettes. Exposure to the thousands of chemicals and toxins in secondhand smoke is dangerous and may cause heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, and other diseases. Secondhand smoke from neighbors can become thirdhand smoke in adjoining living or public spaces.

Thirdhand smoke is the residue of contamination by smoke that lingers after the smoking has stopped. It is made up of the pollutants that settle on indoor surfaces such as clothing, furniture, drapes, bedding, carpet, walls, and floors. People can be exposed to thirdhand smoke through inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact. It contains arsenic, cyanide, formaldehyde, lead, nicotine, and radioactive polonium and can cause cancer, heart problems, fatty liver disease, insulin resistance, pulmonary fibrosis, and hyperactivity in children. Children are at the greatest risk due to crawling and putting non-food items in their mouths.

Many apartment/condo owners and managers are choosing to create smoke-free environments to protect the lung health of their residents. Breathe California encourages them to go smoke-free, offers free no-smoking signs, presents tobacco prevention workshops to tenants, and helps develop, implement, and publicize new policies.

Breathe California is currently working in the City of Menlo Park strengthen its promotion of healthy smoke-free policy efforts in the area. If you are being exposed to neighbors' secondhand smoke/vape or wish to lodge a complaint or ask a question about outdoor dining areas/bars or restaurants not complying with existing laws, you can call Breathe California's Secondhand Smoke Helpline at (408) 999-0500. We are grateful to the California Tobacco Prevention Program for partially funding this program.

BREATHE CALIFORNIA OF THE BAY AREA, GOLDEN GATE & CENTRAL COAST is dedicated to fighting lung disease and advocating for clean air. As one of California's oldest voluntary health organizations, BREATHE CALIFORNIA addresses the most critical lung health threats through prevention, education, patient support, research, and advocacy.

###