

FACT SHEET

What's in Tobacco Smoke?

Tobacco smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals; Hundreds are known to be toxic and about 70 can cause cancer.

Tobacco smoke is a major cause of lung cancer and COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) which includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

Exposure to tobacco smoke can make asthma and existing heart, lung, and allergic conditions worse.

Nonsmokers inhaling secondhand tobacco smoke are exposed to many of the same toxins and cancer-causing chemicals.

Some of the dangerous ingredients found in tobacco smoke:

Cancer-Causing Chemicals

- Formaldehyde: Used to embalm dead bodies
- Benzene: Found in gasoline
- Polonium 210: Radioactive and very toxic
- Vinyl chloride: Used to make pipes

Toxic Metals

- Chromium: Used to make steel
- Arsenic: Used in pesticides
- Lead: Once used in paint
- Cadmium: Used to make batteries

Poison Gases

- Carbon monoxide: Found in car exhausts
- Hydrogen cyanide: Used in chemical weapons
- Ammonia: Used in household cleaners
- Butane: Used in lighter fluid
- Toluene: Found in paint thinners



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention