
Asthma Problems

Second-Hand Smoke

A man smoking and exposing second-hand smoke to a baby



VOCABULARY LIST

Second-hand Smoke: the smoke we inhale from other people's cigarettes

Concentration: the amount of a substance

Chemical: a mixture of substances

Respiratory: the breathing system

Hazardous: dangerous or risky

In New York City, approximately 1,000 people die from second-hand smoking each year. Second-hand smoke is the smoke we breathe from other people's cigarettes. It can cause strokes and heart disease. Second-hand smoke also contains many hazardous chemicals, some of which can cause cancer. The concentration of some of these chemicals, such as carcinogenic chemicals, is higher in

second-hand smoke then when inhaled directly by a smoker.

Second-hand smoking does not only affect adults, but also plays a part in child health problems. Second hand smoking increases low birth-weight deliveries among non-smoking women. 26,000 new cases of asthma are developed each year because of second-hand smoke. There can be up to 2.2 million ear infections in children be-

cause of this deadly problem. It also increases the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome also known as SIDS. Up to 2,700 deaths occur do to this syndrome. Lastly, 150,000 to 300,000 cases of lower respiratory track problems are diagnosed.

Pets Affecting Asthma

Tobacco smoke and pet dander are two of the most common contributors to worse asthma symptoms. The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute has recommended that the first step in controlling asthma is reduction of exposure to irritants, such as tobacco smoke, and allergens, like pet dander.

A doctor named Dr. Wamboldt and his colleagues interviewed 152 children with asthma from the ages of 7 to 18 years and at least one parent of each child about potential allergens and irritants in their homes, the child's asthma history, the family's asthma knowledge, education, occupation, family functioning, stressful life events and quality of life.

67% of the children lived in homes with a furred or feathered pet, a little bit more than the 59% of U.S. homes reported to have pets.

However, smoking, pet ownership and adherence to asthma medications do not tie in with each other. They are different problems that must be dealt with separately. Researchers examined the socioeconomic and psychosocial data on the families, and they found really different profiles for the households with smokers and those with pets.

It is proven that households with furred or feathered pets are usually associated with older children, better parental asthma knowledge, and better family functioning.

Families with pets have good resources and are otherwise relatively judicious in their asthma care. As a result, physicians may have more success exploring the family's decision to acquire the pet, rather than simply telling them to get rid of the animal. If the family knows the child is not allergic to that specific animal or the child's exposure to the animal or if dander is well controlled, then the benefits of pet ownership may outweigh potential liabilities. The physician could then discuss other strategies for controlling pet allergens, such as bathing the pet very often.

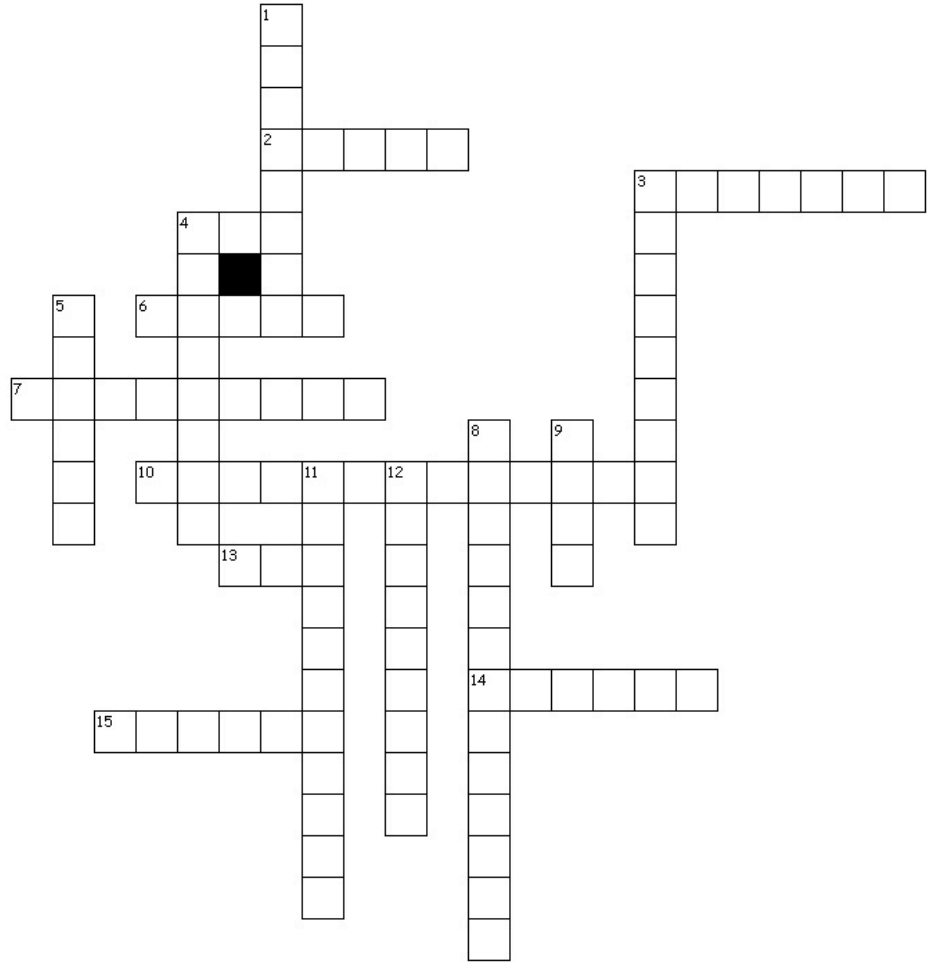


Across

- 2. organ in vertebrates
- 3. fumigation
- 4. the mixture of gases, mainly nitrogen and oxygen, that forms the Earth's atmosphere
- 6. a photosynthetic organism that has cellulose cell walls
- 7. potentially very dangerous to living beings or the environment
- 10. to remove the trees from an area of land
- 13. substance that is neither a solid nor a liquid at ordinary temperatures and has the ability to expand infinitely
- 14. scales of hair or feathers
- 15. respiratory disease

Down

- 1. offspring
- 3. a tall tough-stemmed species of grass grown in warm regions throughout the world
- 4. any substance that causes an allergic reaction
- 5. largest country in South America
- 8. a heavy colorless odorless atmospheric gas
- 9. very large urban area
- 11. relating to or used in breathing or the system in the body that takes in and distributes oxygen
- 12. a kind of matter or material



Crossword Puzzle