

Children exposed to cigarette smoke have increased risk of COPD in adulthood

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A new study published in the journal *Respirology* reveals that children who are exposed to passive smoke have almost double the risk of developing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in adulthood compared with non-exposed children.

At Haukeland University Hospital in Bergen, Norway, researchers examined patients with COPD (433) and control subjects (325) who participated in the Bergen COPD [Cohort Study](#) during 2006-2009. Ane Johannessen, PhD, and co-workers assessed risk factors for COPD and analyzed by gender.

Results found that exposure to passive smoke when they were growing up almost doubled their risk for COPD and respiratory symptoms in adulthood.

Gender differences existed, with women being exposed to passive smoke during childhood having a 1.9-fold greater risk of COPD than women who had not been exposed. Men who had been exposed to passive smoke during childhood had a 1.5- to 1.7-fold greater risk of COPD-related symptoms than men who had not been exposed.

Childhood passive smoke exposure was overall a much stronger risk factor for COPD and COPD-related symptoms than adulthood passive smoke exposure in this study population.

"Our results suggest that the long-term burden of COPD could be

reduced if children were not exposed to [cigarette smoke](#)," Johannessen notes. "Further, they indicate that factors affecting early-life development of lung function has important long-term consequences for adult life."

Provided by Wiley

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