

## **LINK BETWEEN HEART ATTACKS AND SECOND HAND SMOKE: KEY FACTS AND STUDIES**

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People living or working around secondhand smoke have a 30% increased risk of fatal and nonfatal heart disease.

Secondhand smoke causes over 35,000 deaths from coronary heart disease each year in the U.S.

### **Helena, Montana hospital study<sup>1</sup>**

Background: a smoke-free work place ordinance was enacted in the city of Helena, Montana. The study tracked the incidence of heart attacks (acute myocardial infarction, AMI) before and ordinance.

Key points:

- During the six months that a smoke –free work places law was implemented admissions for heart attacks (AMIs) fell by 40%.
- Smoke-free laws not only protect people from the long-term dangers of second smoke but that they may also be associated with a rapid decrease in heart attacks.
- The CDC concludes that “even without future studies or replications of these findings the data [from the Helena study] are sufficient to warrant caution regarding exposure to secondhand smoke.

[Link to Full Study](#)

### **Commentary on the Helena study by the CDC<sup>2</sup>**

- Relatively small exposures to toxins in tobacco smoke seem to cause unexpectedly large increases in the risk of acute cardiovascular disease.
- Exposure to secondhand smoke increases the risk of fatal and non-fatal coronary heart disease in non-smokers by about 30%.
- The US Surgeon General has concluded that exposure to secondhand smoke is a common problem public health hazard that is completely preventable.

[Link to Full Commentary](#)

### **Pueblo City, Pueblo County, El Paso, Colorado hospital study<sup>3</sup>**

Background: a smoke free work place ordinance was enacted in Pueblo County. The study traced the incidence of heart attacks (acute myocardial infarction, AMI) 1.5 years before and 1.5 years after the implementation. The study also compared AMI rates to a neighboring county without a smoke free work place ordinance.

- AMI's decreased by 27% following the enactment of the smoke-free work place ordinance.
- Pueblo, Colorado is the second U.S. community to examine data on hospital admissions for heart attacks following the institution of a comprehensive indoor smoke-free ordinance.
- The Pueblo study's findings are similar to a study done in Helena, Montana, which noted a 40% drop in hospital admissions for heart attacks during a six-month period when Helena first implemented its smoking ordinance. Pueblo's study reinforces the Helena findings based on similar but improved methodology, including a sample size that was three times the one used in Helena.

[Link to Full Study](#)

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<sup>1</sup>Sargent R, Shepard RM, Glantz SA Reduced Incidence of admissions for myocardial infraction associated with public smoking ban: before and after study. BMJ 2004;328;977-989; originally published online 5 Apr 2004; doi:10.1136/bmj.38055.715683.55 [http://www.smokefreewi.org/pdf/Helena\\_Study.pdf](http://www.smokefreewi.org/pdf/Helena_Study.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> CDC. At: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/statab/unpubd/mortabs/lcwk9\\_](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/statab/unpubd/mortabs/lcwk9_)

<sup>3</sup> Reduction in the Incidence of Acute Myocardial Infarction Associated with a Citywide Smoking Ordinance. [http://www.smokefreewi.org/pdf/Bartecchi\\_1782291.pdf](http://www.smokefreewi.org/pdf/Bartecchi_1782291.pdf)