

Society for the Prevention
of Cruelty to Animals (HK)
香港愛護動物協會

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Clerk to Bills Committee on Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2005
Legislative Council Secretariat
3/F, Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Council Members,

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (HK) supports the amendments to the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance (CAP 371) and subsidiary legislation to tighten the control on smoking.

We would also like to point out that the deleterious effects of environmental tobacco smoke not only effect humans but animals too (please see attached article), as such any statutory ban should also take into consideration the protection of animal health.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Fiona Woodhouse

Deputy Director (Welfare)



<Fact Sheet>

“Passive” smoking and its effects in pets

Cigarette smoke contains numerous gaseous and particulate toxins, and is known to cause damage to lung tissue, increased secretion and pooling of mucus. In humans it is firmly established as an important risk factor for development of **lung cancer**, and is also linked to **chronic bronchitis, asthma, emphysema, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and reduced immune function.**

Increasingly, experts are worried about the links being made between exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS, or so-called “passive” smoking) and varying types of cancers in pets who live with smokers. Many studies have indicated that there is a link between ETS and cancer in pets. These tumours include **squamous cell carcinoma** of the oral cavity (the most common cancer of the mouth in humans and animals and a smoking-related neoplasm in smokers), **nasal tumours** and **malignant lymphoma**, a common cancer similar to non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma in humans. Several studies in humans have suggested a link between smoking and non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma.

A paper published by Drs Elizabeth R. Bertone, Laura A. Snyder and Antony S. Moore, “Environmental Tobacco Smoke and risk of malignant lymphoma in Pet Cats” in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* 165(3); 268-73 in August 2002 found that the risk of **lymphoma** in cats living with **any** ETS exposure increased by a factor of 2.4, while in those with 5 or more years of ETS exposure the risk of developing lymphoma tripled. If two smokers lived in the house, cats were four times more likely to develop the cancer. Because cats groom extensively, their alimentary tract, especially the oral cavity, may be exposed to particulate matter deposited on their fur. Exposure to ETS was associated with an increased risk of oral **squamous cell carcinoma**; cats with **any** exposure to ETS had 1.5 times the risk of oral SCC as those with no ETS exposure, and those with increased duration or dose (such as living with more than 1 smoker) of exposure being even more likely to develop cancers.

In addition, a study by Rief et al in 1992 (“Passive smoking and canine lung cancer risk”, *American Journal of Epidemiology* 135:234) showed an increase risk of **lung cancer** in brachycephalic and mesocephalic (short- and medium-nosed) dogs, while Hayes et al in 1982 (“Carcinoma of the nasal cavity and paranasal sinuses in dogs: descriptive epidemiology”, *Cornell Vet.* 72: 168) showed an increased risk of **nasal cancer** in dolichocephalic (long-nosed) dogs; it has been postulated that these trends reflect a tendency for carcinogens to be deposited in varying sites depending on anatomy.

Second-hand cigarette smoke contains, amongst others, carbon monoxide gas, formaldehyde, acrolein and various particles from combustion. Exposure to ETS constituents can significantly worsen respiratory/bronchopulmonary disease, and has been cited as a trigger for feline asthma (a multi-factorial disease) and allergies.

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It is clear that the impact of environmental tobacco smoke on the health of pet animals is considerable, with ETS exposure increasing the risk of some of the most common cancers in pet animals. The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (HK) feels that this information should be used to inform owners of the risk to their animals' health.

On the grounds of public health, both animal and human, the SPCA is in support of the ban on smoking in public places.

Article written by:
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