

Indoor Air Quality

BACKGROUND

Indoor air quality is important as humans are estimated to spend approximately 80% of their time indoors (Public Health Advisory Committee 2002). A key source of indoor air pollution in New Zealand is exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke from either the air exhaled by the smoker or from the smoke burning at the end of the cigarette. Exposure to second-hand smoke has health effects such as chest infections, severe asthma, ear infections, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and premature death in children (US Department of Health and Human Services 2006). Studies have also shown that non-smoking adults who are exposed to second-hand smoke have an increased risk of lung cancer and ischaemic heart disease (US Department of Health and Human Services 2006).

The data are from the 2006/07 New Zealand Health Survey (NZHS) carried out from September 2006 to December 2007 (Ministry of Health 2008c). Data were collected on exposure to second-hand smoke in the home, among children (aged 0–14 years) and non-smoking adults (aged 15 years and over). Non-smokers were defined as adults who were not currently smoking tobacco (including ex-smokers) at the time of the survey. Estimates have been provided by DHB area, but some DHBs were combined for analysis due to small sample sizes. Results are presented as prevalence estimates with 95% confidence intervals, and have not been adjusted for age, thereby reflecting the true burden of exposure.

References

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