What is Passive Smoking?

Smoking cigarettes or bidis not only harms the individual's health but also harms those who are standing nearby or sitting in the same room where an individual is smoking. Exposure to second hand smoking is called Passive Smoking. Children and women are especially exposed to the dangers of second-hand smoke, if they have a family member who smokes.

Passive smoking is associated with an increased risk of lung cancer, heart attack, difficulty in breathing, coughing, asthma, ear infection, irritation to the eyes, nose and throat, and long-term negative effects on the brain.

Effects of tobacco use

Tobacco use is dangerous. The negative health effects include both **long-term** (i.e. future) and **short-term** (i.e. immediate) effects. The effects occur not only as a result of regular use, but even when used occasionally and in some cases, with exposure to passive smoking. The table below lists the effects of tobacco:

Short Term Health Effects	Long Term Health Effects
Asthma	Eye problems like cataract
Tooth decay/Gum disease	Cancers of oral cavity, larynx (voice box), oesophagus (food pipe), lungs, stomach, throat and other cancers.
Trouble breathing	Increased chances of Tuberculosis
Bad breath	Heart Attack - Heart and blood vessel disease (stroke)
	High Blood Pressure; Diabetes; Kidney Damage
	Tobacco use in pregnancy leads to Low Birth Weight babies
	Respiratory/Breathing problems
	Impotence and low fertility among men

India's Tobacco Cessation Programme

In 2003, India introduced the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA-2003). According to this Act,

- Smoking is completely banned in public places like hospitals, public transport like buses, trains, taxis, schools and colleges, parks, etc.

- Tobacco products cannot be sold to person below the age of 18 years.

- Tobacco cannot be sold in places within 100 metres from the educational institutions such as schools and colleges.

- Ban of advertisements on tobacco through electronic and print media.

The National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) is a programme launched by Government of India in 2007 to increase public awareness about the harmful effects of