

News Release



American Heart
Association

National Center
7320 Greenville Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75231

PLEASE NOTE EMBARGO:
For Release 11 A.M. EDT Wednesday
June 10, 1992

NR 92-3990 (ETS)*
For more information, contact:
Howard L. Lewis (214) 706-1340
Joe Marx (202) 822-9380

A.H.A. CALLS ENVIRONMENTAL TOBACCO SMOKE A MAJOR PREVENTABLE RISK FOR HEART DISEASE

WASHINGTON, June 10 -- The American Heart Association released a scientific position paper today that calls Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS), also known as passive smoking, "a major preventable cause of cardiovascular disease and death."

At a news conference co-sponsored by the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association and the American Cancer Society, united as the Coalition on Smoking OR Health, scientists said a smoke-free environment should be a goal of our society.

"Environmental Tobacco Smoke and Cardiovascular Disease: A Position Paper from the Cardiopulmonary and Critical Care Council of the AHA," is co-authored by Aubrey E. Taylor, Ph.D.; Douglas C. Johnson, M.D.; and Homayoun Kazemi, M.D. The paper will be published as a special report in the August issue of the AHA scientific journal Circulation.

The authors strongly support a nationwide effort to eliminate all exposure of non-smokers to ETS. "This requires that ETS be treated as an environmental toxin and ways should be developed to eliminate the exposure of workers and the public to this health hazard," they conclude.

AHA President W. Virgil Brown, M.D., professor of medicine at Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, says, "As a result of this paper, a major part of the AHA mission will be to educate the public about the dangers of ETS."

Adds Taylor, professor and chairman of physiology at the University of South Alabama, Mobile, "We now know that non-smokers are at an increased risk for heart disease because of exposure to other people's smoke. This includes people who have no say in the matter, such as children whose parents smoke. This alone means that a smoke-free environment in the home, public buildings and the workplace should be the goal of everyone in our society."

Since the risk of cardiovascular disease is much higher in smokers with other risk factors, "non-smokers who have high blood pressure or high blood

-more-

87681078