American Association for Respiratory Care

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Position Statement

Tobacco and Health

The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) is a professional organization dedicated to the protection of health through public education and the provision of the highest standards of respiratory care. By virtue of their education and health care experience, respiratory therapists are professionals who have a clear understanding of the nature of cardiopulmonary disease and are in a position to act as advocates for healthy hearts and lungs. The AARC is an advocate for both tobacco cessation and tobacco prevention programs.

The AARC recognizes its responsibility to the public by taking a strong position against cigarette smoking and the use of tobacco in any form, and the inhalation of any toxic substance. In view of the evidence, which confirms the health-threatening consequences of using these products in both active and passive forms, the AARC is committed to the elimination of smoking and the use of any tobacco products and the inhalation of any toxic substance.

The AARC acknowledges and supports the rights of non-smokers and pledges continuing sponsorship and support of initiatives, programs, and legislation to reduce and eliminate smoking. The AARC extends its concern beyond the smoking of tobacco to the use of smokeless tobacco. These products are linked to diseases of not only the heart and lungs, but also to the gastrointestinal tract, mouth, and nose. There is also evidence that these products, when applied to the mucous membranes, diffuse into the circulation and can also cause ill effects in remote organs of the body.

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