

## Local Smoke-Free Laws Tied to Fewer Lung Cancer Cases



TUESDAY, Dec. 5, 2017 (HealthDay News) -- Communities with strong smoke-free workplace laws have lower lung cancer rates than those with no smoke-free laws, researchers report.

The new study was conducted in Kentucky, which has one of the highest lung cancer rates in the United States.

University of Kentucky researchers examined 20 years of data on new lung cancer cases among state residents aged 50 and older. The investigators then looked to see whether those with lung cancer lived in communities with strong, moderate or weak smoke-free laws.

The lung cancer rate was 8 percent lower in communities with strong smoke-free workplace laws than in communities without smoke-free laws, the findings showed. There were no differences in lung cancer rates between communities with moderate or weak smoking laws and those with no such laws.

"Kentucky has one of the highest adult cigarette smoking rates and the highest rate of new lung cancer cases in the nation," said study author Ellen Hahn, a professor in the university's college of nursing.

"Only one-third of Kentuckians are protected by strong smoke-free workplace laws," she said in a university news release.

Previous studies have shown that strong smoke-free laws reduce rates of heart attack, stroke, asthma and emphysema. It was not known if communities with strong smoke-free laws have fewer cases of new lung cancer, the researchers noted.

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Smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke are major causes of lung cancer.

"Local government can play a critical role in preventing lung cancer," Hahn said. "Elected officials can ensure that all workers and the public are protected from secondhand smoke by passing strong smoke-free laws with few or no exceptions."

The study was published online Nov. 28 in the journal *Cancer*.

**More information**

The American Cancer Society offers a [guide to quitting smoking](#).

SOURCE: University of Kentucky, news release, Nov. 29, 2017

-- [Robert Preidt](#)

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