

PRESS RELEASE

PETS PASSIVELY SMOKE 3,285 CIGARETTES EACH YEAR

- Smokers who own pets smoke an average of nine cigarettes in their home each day
- This is despite the majority (78%) knowing their habit could be harmful to their pets
- However, 68% said it would encourage them to give up smoking if it made their pet ill
- MORE TH>N calls on pet owners to give up smoking to protect their pets' health

Pet owners who smoke are harming their animals by smoking an average of nine cigarettes in their home each day, according to new research from MORE TH>N pet insurance¹.

That means individual pets could be exposed to an estimated 3,285 cigarettes each year. This is despite three quarters (78%) acknowledging that their habit could harm their pets.

The research, which coincides with [‘Stoptober’](#), Public Health England’s campaign encouraging smokers to quit for 28 days, reveals that almost a quarter (22%) chain smoke 15 or more cigarettes in their home on a daily basis. A further 20% of pet owners admit their cat or dog has even eaten cigarettes or smoking-related items in the past, including e-cigarettes.

More than half (52%) of pet owners who smoke said their pets spend 23 hours or more at home, where chemicals and bacteria released by smoking indoors can linger in the air and cause respiratory problems or cancer.

The findings also reveal how cats or dogs react when their owner begins to smoke, with 30% saying their pet moves away from them. Conversely, 17% said their pet sits beside them and 13% of pets appear to enjoy the smell of cigarettes, leaving them more exposed to the dangers of passive smoking.

Positively, more than two thirds (68%) said it would encourage them to quit smoking if they found out it had made their pet ill. Other factors that might help them give up smoking included:

- Benefits to their own health (37%)
- Benefits to their family’s health (32%)
- Taking up a healthier lifestyle, such as a new sport or changing diet (32%)

Andrew Moore, Director of Pet Claims at MORE TH>N and a qualified vet, said: “This Stoptober, MORE TH>N is calling on pet owners to give up smoking. Passive smoking is just as dangerous for pets as it is for humans, and increases the likelihood of them developing cancer and a range of other health issues. We urge pet owners that smoke to avoid doing so around their pets or inside their home to reduce their exposure to second-hand smoke. Our pets dedicate their lives to us so it is important that we thank them by keeping them happy and healthy.”

Veterinary Surgeon Dr Robert J White-Adams, said: “Research has shown cats that live with smokers are about twice as likely to develop a malignant lymphoma and dogs that live with smokers are 60% more likely to develop lung cancer. It’s heart breaking to hear pets are inhaling second-hand smoke and other chemicals for up to 23 hours from over three thousand cigarettes each year.”

This Stoptober MORE TH>N pet insurance is calling on pet owners to consider giving up smoking in order to protect the health of their pets. For more information and support on methods for stopping or reducing the amount you smoke, please head to the Stoptober website: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/quit-smoking/stoptober/>.

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For more information, please contact Cow PR - morethan@cowpr.com / 020 7234 9150

Notes to Editors

¹Unless otherwise stated, figures are from research conducted online by OnePoll on behalf of MORE TH>N amongst 2,000 cat and dog owners who smoke. The fieldwork took place between 5th and 10th September 2019.

² 3,285 cigarettes smoked by pet each year: 9 cigarettes smoked on average each day x 365 days in the year

About MORE TH>N

MORE TH>N is the direct financial services arm of RSA. Established in 2001, the company offers car, home, pet, business and travel insurance.