

How Smoking Affects You Physically and Psychologically

Below are some facts about the effects of tobacco use. Review them and place a check by those items that mean “*a great deal.*” to you. By identifying disadvantages of tobacco use that are personally relevant to you, it may help motivate you to quit smoking.

Smoking and Your Physical Health

- Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable and premature death, killing an estimated 443,000 Americans each year.
- Smoking places the health of others you live with at risk (49,400 Americans die annually from second hand smoke related to heart disease and lung cancer). Also, if you smoke, your children are also much more likely to smoke and suffer the same negative health consequences.
- Smoking worsens chronic diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, hepatitis-C, kidney disease, and many lung disorders, like bronchitis.
- Smoking makes it more difficult to have an erection and function sexually.
- Smoking makes people physically unattractive by causing gum disease, yellowing teeth, and aging skin prematurely.

Smoking and Your Psychological Health and Well Being

- Smokers have more anxiety and panic symptoms than non-smokers, because nicotine is a stimulant that increases heart rate, blood pressure, and difficulty getting oxygen.
- Smokers have higher stress levels than non-smokers, caused by nicotine withdrawal in between cigarettes. They are also more likely to be depressed.
- Smokers often don't sleep well because nicotine withdrawal disrupts restful sleep.
- Many smokers can't participate in desired physical activities because they don't have enough energy or stamina and they get winded easily.
- Many smokers resent being controlled by the inconvenience and expense of their nicotine addiction.



Physical and Psychological Benefits of Not Smoking

Place a check next to the facts listed below that you care about “*a great deal.*” Identifying the benefits of quitting smoking that are personally relevant to you will increase your motivation to quit smoking.

Physical Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

- Improved circulation and blood flow
- Improved sleep
- Improved taste, smell, and enjoyment of food
- Improved ability to breathe and less shortness of breath
- Reduced risk of home fires
- Improved effectiveness of medications you take that are negatively affected by smoking
- Dramatically reduced risk of dying from a heart attack, stroke, and cancer of the lung and other organs
- Reduced risk of developing and dying from lung disease (emphysema and bronchitis)
- Slow the progression of diseases that you may already have, like diabetes, heart disease, asthma, bronchitis, or kidney failure

Benefits of Quitting Smoking

For Your Quality of Life and Well Being

- Less emotional stress because quitting smoking lowers blood pressure and heart rate and eliminates effects of withdrawal symptoms
- Improved memory and ability to think clearly
- Greater energy and stamina for recreational activities and day-to-day tasks
- More money to spend on things you enjoy
- Pride in being a better role model for your children and grandchildren
- Freedom from being controlled by nicotine addiction
- Improved physical appearance (you’ll smell better and age better).



Benefits of Quitting Smoking; How the Body Heals

The minute a person stops smoking, the body starts healing. Within 20 minutes after that last cigarette is smoked, your body begins a series of changes that continues for years.

- **20 Minutes After Quitting**
Your heart rate drops.
- **12 hours After Quitting**
Carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
- **2 Weeks to 3 Months After Quitting**
Your heart attack risk begins to drop.
Your lung function increases up to 30%.
- **1 to 9 Months After Quitting**
Your coughing and shortness of breath decrease.
- **1 Year After Quitting**
Your added risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.
- **5 Years After Quitting**
Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker's 5-15 years after quitting.
- **10 Years After Quitting**
Your lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker's.
Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas decreases.
- **15 Years After Quitting**
Your risk of coronary heart disease is back to that of a nonsmoker's.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2004.





When coping with urges/cravings:

Remember to HALT!

Avoid getting:
Hungry
Angry
Lonely or Tired

