

Smoking: It Is Never Too Late to Stop

“I have smoked 2 packs of cigarettes a day for 40 years. What is the use of quitting now?”

Why Should I Stop Smoking?



If you stop smoking, you are likely to add years to your life, breathe more easily, and have more energy. You will have extra money for spending or saving and food will taste better.

By quitting smoking, you will:

- Reduce the chance of cancer, heart attack, and lung disease
- Have better blood circulation
- Have healthier family members, particularly grandchildren
- Become a lifestyle example for children and grandchildren
- Eliminate the odor of smoke in your clothes and hair
- Have a more sensitive sense of smell

When you quit smoking, you join over a million people who break the habit each year.

What Does Smoking Do to Me?



Smoking shortens your life. It damages your lungs and airways. It can cause a cough that does not go away. It can lead to chronic bronchitis, and if you do not quit, it can lead to emphysema. It reduces the life of the average smoker by 12 years.

Lifelong smokers have a 1 in 2 chance of dying from a smoking-related disease. More than 400,000 people in the U.S. die early each year due to smoking.

Smoking makes millions of Americans sick by causing heart disease, cancer, respiratory problems, and even osteoporosis (thinning of your bones).

Why Should I Quit at My Age?

It is never too late to quit smoking. As soon as you stop, you immediately start to improve your health.

- Your heart and circulatory system (your arteries and veins that your blood flows through) start to get better.
- Your chance of heart attack and stroke begins to drop.
- The flow of blood to your hands and feet gets stronger.
- Your breathing becomes easier a few months after quitting.
- Your chance of getting cancer from smoking decreases.

Quitting cannot undo permanent lung damage, but it may slow further damage to your lungs. In fact, within 10 to 15 years of quitting, your risk of getting cancer and heart disease is almost as low as that of a non-smoker.

How Can I Break the Habit?



Smoking is a strong addiction for both body and mind. That is why it is so hard to stop. But, people do succeed. Since 1965 over 30 million Americans have quit.

Here are some things you can do to help you to stop smoking:

- Make a firm decision to quit.
- Choose a date to stop smoking.
- Do not choose a substitute such as a pipe, cigars, or smokeless tobacco. They are just as dangerous.
- Pick one or more of the methods below to help you quit:
 - Read self-help literature
 - Take a quit-smoking class
 - Use individual or group counseling
 - Join a support group or get a friend to quit with you
 - Take medicine to help with nicotine withdrawal
 - Use nicotine replacement therapy

Resources

Organizations

American Cancer Society

Phone: (800) ACS-2345 (227-2345)

TTY: (866) 288-4327

Web site: www.cancer.org

American Lung Association

61 Broadway, 6th Floor

New York, NY 10006

Phone: (800) LUNG-USA (586-4872)

Web site: www.lungusa.org

National Cancer Institute

9000 Rockville Pike

Bethesda, MD 20892

Smoking Quit Line: (877) 448-7848

Web site: www.cancer.gov

National Smoking Quitline

Phone: (800) QUITNOW (784-8669)

TTY: (800) 332-8615

Web site: www.smokefree.gov

***Office on Smoking and Health, Center for Disease Control
and Prevention***

Mail Stop K-50

4770 Buford Highway, NE

Atlanta, GA 30341-3724

Phone: (800) CDC-4636 (232-4636)

Web site: www.cdc.gov/tobacco

Web Site

www.medlineplus.gov

Up-to-date, quality health care information. Go to Health Topics, "Smoking."