

Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking

Overview

Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body. Smoking causes many diseases and reduces the health of smokers in general.¹

Smoking and Death - Smoking causes death.

- The adverse health effects from cigarette smoking account for an estimated 443,000 deaths, or nearly one of every five deaths, each year in the United States.^{2,3}
- More deaths are caused each year by tobacco use than by all deaths from human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), illegal drug use, alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides, and murders combined.^{2,4}
- Smoking causes an estimated 90% of all lung cancer deaths in men and 80% of all lung cancer deaths in women.¹
- An estimated 90% of all deaths from chronic obstructive lung disease are caused by smoking.¹

Smoking and Increased Health Risks

Compared with nonsmokers, smoking is estimated to increase the risk of

- coronary heart disease by 2 to 4 times,^{1,5}
- stroke by 2 to 4 times,^{1,6}
- men developing lung cancer by 23 times,¹
- women developing lung cancer by 13 times,¹ and
- dying from chronic obstructive lung diseases (such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema) by 12 to 13 times.¹

Smoking and Cardiovascular Disease

- Smoking causes coronary heart disease, the leading cause of death in the United States.¹
- Cigarette smoking causes reduced circulation by narrowing the blood vessels (arteries) and puts smokers at risk of developing peripheral vascular disease (i.e., obstruction of the large arteries in the arms and legs that can cause a range of problems from pain to tissue loss or gangrene).^{1,7}
- Smoking causes abdominal aortic aneurysm (i.e., a swelling or weakening of the main artery of the body—the aorta—where it runs through the abdomen).¹

Smoking and Respiratory Disease

- Smoking causes lung cancer.^{1,2}
- Smoking causes lung diseases (e.g., emphysema, bronchitis, chronic airway obstruction) by damaging the airways and alveoli (i.e., small air sacs) of the lungs.^{1,2}

Smoking and Cancer

Smoking causes the following cancers:¹

- Acute myeloid leukemia
- Bladder cancer
- Cancer of the cervix
- Cancer of the esophagus
- Kidney cancer
- Cancer of the larynx (voice box)
- Lung cancer
- Cancer of the oral cavity (mouth)
- Cancer of the pharynx (throat)
- Stomach cancer
- Cancer of the uterus

Smoking and Other Health Effects


Smoking has many adverse reproductive and early childhood effects, including increased risk for

- infertility
- preterm delivery
- stillbirth
- low birth weight
- sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).^{1,8}






Smoking is associated with the following adverse health effects:⁸

- Postmenopausal women who smoke have lower bone density than women who never smoked.
- Women who smoke have an increased risk for hip fracture than women who never smoked.

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References – Smoking Cessation

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Smoking Cessation

Overview

Tobacco use can lead to nicotine dependence and serious health problems. Cessation can significantly reduce the risk of suffering from smoking-related diseases. Tobacco dependence is a chronic condition that often requires repeated interventions, but effective treatments and helpful resources exist. Smokers can and do quit smoking. In fact, today there are more former smokers than current smokers.¹

Nicotine Dependence

- Nicotine is the psychoactive drug in tobacco products that produces dependence.^{2,3,4} Most smokers are dependent on nicotine.^{1,3} **Nicotine dependence is the most common form of chemical dependence in the United States.**⁴ Research suggests that nicotine is as addictive as heroin, cocaine, or alcohol.^{1,5}
- Quitting smoking is difficult and may require multiple attempts.³ Users often relapse because of stress, weight gain, and withdrawal symptoms.^{2,3,6}
- Examples of nicotine withdrawal symptoms include irritability, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and increased appetite.^{1,2}

Health Benefits of Cessation

Breaking free from nicotine dependence is not the only reason to quit smoking. Cigarette smoke contains more than 7000 chemicals. Hundreds are toxic and about 70 are carcinogenic (i.e., cause cancer).⁷

Fortunately, people who stop smoking greatly reduce their risk for disease and premature death.^{7,8} Although the health benefits are greater for people who stop at earlier ages, cessation is beneficial at all ages.^{8,9,10}

Smoking cessation is associated with the following health benefits:^{8,9,10}

- Smoking cessation lowers the risk for lung and other types of cancer.
- Smoking cessation reduces the risk for coronary heart disease, stroke, and peripheral vascular disease. Coronary heart disease risk is reduced within 1 to 2 years of cessation.
- Smoking cessation reduces respiratory symptoms, such as coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. The rate of decline in lung function is slower among persons who quit smoking.
- Smoking cessation reduces the risk of developing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), one of the leading causes of death in the United States.⁷
- Smoking cessation by women during their reproductive years reduces the risk for infertility. Women who stop smoking during pregnancy also reduce their risk of having a low birth weight baby.

Smokers' Attempts to Quit

Among current U.S. adult smokers, 70% report that they want to quit completely, and millions have attempted to quit smoking.¹¹ In 2008, an estimated 48 million adults (aged 18 years or older) were former smokers.¹²

Percentage of current smokers who tried to stop smoking during the previous 12 months:

- 51% of high school smokers during 2009¹³
- 45% of adult smokers during 2008 (nearly 21 million people)¹²

Methods to Quit Smoking

Effective treatments that can increase the chances of successful cessation include the following:¹

- Brief clinical interventions (i.e., when a doctor takes 10 minutes or less to deliver advice and assistance about quitting)
- Counseling (e.g., individual, group, or telephone counseling)
- Behavioral cessation therapies (e.g., training in problem solving)
- Treatments with more person-to-person contact and intensity (e.g., more time with counselors)

Cessation medications found to be effective for treating tobacco dependence include the following:

- Over-the-counter and prescription nicotine replacement products (e.g., nicotine gum, inhaler, nasal spray, lozenge, or patch)¹
- Prescription nonnicotine medications, such as bupropion SR (Zyban®)⁵ and varenicline tartrate (Chantix®).^{1,14}

The combination of medication and counseling is more effective for smoking cessation than either medication or counseling alone.¹

Helpful Resources


Publications

The following CDC publications are helpful cessation resources for public health practitioners, businesses, and organizations. Visit [CDC's online publications catalog](#) to order free copies of these and other cessation-related materials:

- [A Practical Guide to Working with Health-Care Systems on Tobacco-Use Treatment](#)
- [Youth Tobacco Cessation—A Guide for Making Informed Decisions](#)
- [Telephone Quitlines: A Resource for Development, Implementation, and Evaluation](#)


Quitline Services

The **CT Quitline** is a telephone help line offered **free of charge** that provides cessation counseling, quitting information, answers to your questions, and support you need while quitting. Call the **CT Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW** for help with quitting or **register online** at www.quitnow.net/connecticut

[1-800-QUIT-NOW](#)  is a **free** telephone support service that can help individuals who want to stop smoking or using tobacco. Callers have access to several types of cessation information and services, including:

- Free support and advice from experienced counselors
- A personalized quit plan
- Self-help materials
- Social support and coping strategies
- The latest information about cessation medications
- Over-the-counter nicotine replacement medications for eligible participants (in more than half of U.S. states)

Cessation Services

- CDC's [How to Quit](#) Web pages provide a variety of cessation tips, tools, and resources.
- Smokefree.gov  is a Web site dedicated to helping smokers quit.

For Further Information

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Media Inquiries: Contact CDC's Office on Smoking and Health press line at 770-488-5493.