

over the years. After one year without smoking, your added risk of heart disease is cut almost in half, and your risk of stroke, lung disease and cancer is reduced, even if you have been smoking for many years.

Q. I've tried to quit before, but have always gone back to smoking. Why is smoking so hard to give up?

A. Nicotine is an addictive drug, not unlike cocaine. It increases the amount of a certain chemical in the brain that makes people feel better. In order to hold onto that good feeling, you need to keep "feeding" nicotine to the brain. Otherwise, when the nicotine supply is cut off, the "feel good" chemical in your brain goes down. This is why you start to feel a "craving" when you go for a while without smoking. You also probably smoke during many of the social activities that you enjoy, such as drinks or dinner out with friends, sporting events, or parties. The fact that you associate smoking with pleasurable activities in your life makes it even harder to give it up.

Your Doctor Can Help

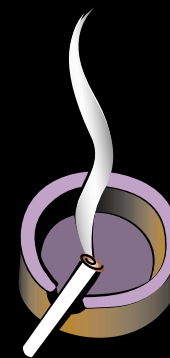
There's no question that kicking the habit successfully can be difficult. It may even take more than one try. But it can be done. At least 44 million former smokers have become smoke free! So at your next visit, ask your doctor about what method or plan might work best for you. Your doctor may recommend such products as nicotine patches, nicotine gum, nicotine nasal sprays, or a non-nicotine pill that help relieve the withdrawal symptoms people experience when they quit smoking. These aids can also be helpful when combined with a behavior modification program that:

- focuses on the psychological and behavioral addictions to smoking
- offers strategies for coping with the urge to smoke (such as keeping carrot sticks handy for munching or taking a walk)

So work with your doctor to cut smoking out of your life now. You'll be amazed at the benefits that will follow. And have confidence. You can be smoke free!



s m o k i n g



A bad habit
that's
good
to break

Why quitting is so important to your health



The health hazards of smoking are well known, and it seems like new dangers are being discovered every day. Still, smoking remains a difficult habit to break, because the nicotine found in tobacco is an addictive drug that reaches the brain with surprising speed. Smokers not only become addicted to nicotine, but also may associate smoking with many of their daily activities, making it even harder to quit.

The good news is that quitting smoking has proven health benefits—regardless of your age.

And there are a number of prescription and over-the-counter products—such as nicotine skin patches, nicotine gum, nicotine nasal sprays, and a non-nicotine pill—that can help you through this challenging period. There are also behavior modification programs you can participate in that offer techniques on how to break the habit.

So take a moment to learn the many reasons why you should stop smoking and the health benefits you can gain if you quit.

After all, isn't it time to clear the air?

Q. Why is smoking so harmful?

A. Smoking is responsible for one in every five deaths in the United States. Diseases related to smoking cause the deaths of nearly 1,200 people every day and more than 430,000 people every year. Smoking is directly responsible for almost 90 percent of all lung cancer cases and for most deaths from emphysema

and chronic bronchitis. Men 65 or older who smoke are twice as likely to die from a stroke than nonsmokers, and women who smoke are about one and a half times as likely to die from a stroke than nonsmoking women. Lung cancer has overtaken breast cancer as the leading cause of cancer deaths among American women.

Secondhand Smoke: The Hidden Danger

Even people who don't smoke can be harmed by the effects of smoking. Anyone who lives or works around smokers is probably inhaling "secondhand smoke." This includes your family and co-workers.

Q. What is "secondhand" smoke?

A. Secondhand smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals. Of these, 200 are poisonous and 63 cause cancer.



Inhaling the smoke from other people's cigarettes is estimated to cause:

- 37,000 deaths from heart disease every year
- approximately 3,000 lung cancer deaths every year
- between 150,000 and 300,000 lower respiratory tract diseases in infants and children under 18 months each year (These include ear infections, bronchitis, and exacerbation of asthma.)
- worsening of lung disease in nonsmoking adults

Q. Can smoking during pregnancy harm my unborn baby?

A. When a pregnant woman smokes, nicotine and carbon monoxide are passed via the placenta to her fetus. Smoking by the mother also prevents as much as 25 percent of oxygen from reaching the placenta, increasing the chances that her baby:



- will be born at a low birth weight
- will be born prematurely
- will be born with narrowed airways and life-threatening lung defects

The Benefits of Quitting: A New Lease on Life

Q. I've smoked for many years. Is it too late for quitting to do me any good?

A. Quitting smoking has proven health benefits, no matter what your age or for how long you've been a smoker. When you quit, your circulation improves immediately and your lungs begin to repair the damage smoking has done to them