



THE DANGERS OF SMOKING

A SMOKER'S BODY

According to the World Health Organization, someone dies every 6.5 seconds from tobacco use. Tobacco is a killer. Smokers and other tobacco users are more likely to develop diseases and die earlier than people who don't smoke. Research suggests that people who start smoking in their teens (as more than 70% do) and continue for two decades or more will die 20 to 25 years earlier than those who never light up. Smoking is highly addictive, dangerous and deadly. Here are some of the health problems associated with smoking.

POOR VISION

Smoking can cause future vision problems and increases the risk of eye problems like glaucoma, macular degeneration, and cataracts.

CONSTRICTED BLOOD VESSELS

Nicotine causes blood vessels to tighten and restrict blood flow, which increases your risk for high blood pressure, stroke, and heart attack.

LOW IMMUNE SYSTEM

Smoking lowers your immune system's ability to fight off infection. Smokers have more infections of the respiratory tract than people who don't smoke.

LUNG CANCER & OTHER LUNG DISEASES

Smoking causes nearly 9 out of 10 lung cancer cases. In addition, people who smoke are at higher risk for chronic nonreversible lung diseases such as:

- emphysema, the destruction of the air sacs in your lungs
- chronic bronchitis, permanent inflammation that affects the lining of the breathing tubes of the lungs
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a group of lung diseases

LIVER CANCER

Smoking ups people's risk for liver cancer.

INFERTILITY

Both men and women who smoke are more likely to experience short- and long-term fertility issues than people who don't smoke.

YELLOW FINGERS

Handling tobacco products can stain your fingers and fingernails, turning them yellow.

INCREASED RISK OF BLOOD CANCER

When compared to people who don't smoke, people who do smoke have an increased risk of blood cancer, such as leukemia.

DIABETES COMPLICATIONS

Type 2 diabetes tends to progress more rapidly in people who smoke, because smoking increases the amount of insulin resistance in the body. If you have diabetes and smoke, you're also at a higher risk for other complications, such as kidney problems, eye problems, and heart attack.

STROKE

Smoking blocks the carotid artery. So, blood supply to the brain cells are cut off. This results in stroke, called cerebral thrombosis. Smokers' risk of having a stroke is 1.5 times more than non-smokers. Smoking also leads to thickening and clotting of the blood. Smoking causes oxidative stress.

TEETH & GUM DISEASE

Smoking is associated with an increased risk of developing inflammation of the gum (gingivitis) and a serious gum infection that can destroy the support system for teeth (periodontitis).

BRONCHITIS

Smokers have a higher rate of bronchitis. Secondhand smoking can also increase your risk for bronchitis, especially in children. Other respiratory problems such as tuberculosis and pneumonia may worsen by smoking.

HEART & CIRCULATORY SYSTEM PROBLEMS

Smoking increases your risk of dying of heart and blood vessel (cardiovascular) disease, including heart attack and stroke. Even smoking just one to four cigarettes daily increases your risk of heart disease. If you have heart or blood vessel disease, such as heart failure, smoking worsens your condition. Smoking also raises blood pressure, weakens blood vessel walls, and increases blood clots. Together, this raises your risk of stroke.

LOSS OF APPETITE & STOMACH ULCERS

Smoking can suppress your appetite by decreasing your sense of taste. This can make eating less enjoyable. Once you stop smoking, you'll be more likely to taste your food fully again. Smoking reduces resistance to the bacteria that cause stomach ulcers. It also impairs the stomach's ability to neutralize acid after a meal, leaving the acid to eat away the stomach lining. Smokers' ulcers are harder to treat and more likely to recur.

CERVICAL CANCER

The risk for developing cervical cancer is increased in women who smoke.

ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION

An erection requires adequate blood flow, but smoking can constrict your blood vessels and make this process more difficult.

WRINKLY SKIN

Substances in cigarettes can cause dry skin and premature aging. Reduced blood flow also causes your skin to get less nutrition.

