

SPOTLIGHT on

Tobacco



**Drug Abuse
Prevention Series**

What's In Tobacco?

Cigarettes contain more than 7,000 chemicals, including 250 poisons. At least 69 of these poisons are known to cause cancer. For instance:

ACETONE: A flammable liquid used as a solvent.

AMMONIA: An irritant used in fertilizers and explosives.

ARSENIC: Deadly to all living things. Used in rat poison.

CARBON MONOXIDE:

A gas that drives oxygen from the red blood cells, causing suffocation.

CYANIDE: A poisonous gas.

FORMALDEHYDE:

A poison used to preserve and embalm dead tissue.

NICOTINE: Constricts blood vessels, cuts down the flow of blood and oxygen. Extremely poisonous. Used in weed killers and insecticides.

NITROGEN DIOXIDE: A gas that dissolves in lung tissue, rated dangerous by the EPA.

TAR: Highly carcinogenic. Forms a sticky mass that damages lung tissue.



For years, the tobacco industry tried to lure teens into smoking by selling cigarettes laced with cherry, vanilla, licorice or other natural flavors. In 2009, the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act made it illegal to add any flavoring (except menthol) to cigarettes.

What Is Nicotine?

Nicotine is a highly addictive drug found in the tobacco leaf. It belongs to a group of poisonous chemicals known as *alkaloids*. Nicotine is so poisonous that it was used as a pesticide for decades.



Did You Know?

Just one drop of purified nicotine on the tongue is so toxic that it would kill a person.

SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

If you smoke even a few cigarettes, here's what you can expect will soon happen to your body and appearance:

- ashtray breath
- stained fingernails and teeth
- smelly hair and clothes
- hacking cough
- dry skin with a pale or grayish color
- small bumps on the gums and tongue
- plugs of phlegm in the lungs and throat
- decreased ability to taste and smell
- trouble exercising or playing sports
- sore throat, tongue and gums
- greater risk of flu and pneumonia



Long-Term Damage



THE LUNGS – Smoking causes 87% of all lung cancers. Smoking can also lead to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)—a disease that destroys a person's ability to breathe normally.

THE NOSE – Smokers have a doubled risk of nasal cancer compared to non-smokers. Inflammation of nasal cavities is also common.

THE EYES – Compared to non-smokers, smokers are twice as likely to develop cataracts and age-related macular degeneration, two diseases that can lead to blindness.

THE BRAIN – Smoking restricts blood flow through the body, which can lead to a stroke—a blockage in the arteries leading to the brain. Smokers are three times more likely to suffer a stroke than non-smokers.

THE HEART – Smoking doubles a person's risk of developing heart disease. About 30% of all coronary heart disease deaths in the U.S. are related to cigarette smoking. Other smoking-related heart problems include arteriosclerosis, irregular heartbeats, angina and heart attack.

THE BLADDER – Smokers are three times as likely to develop bladder cancer than non-smokers.

WHY IS SMOKING SO ADDICTIVE?

- Nicotine reaches the brain within seven seconds after the smoke is inhaled and rapidly causes chemical changes in the brain that can lead to addiction.
- Like other drugs of abuse, nicotine increases levels of the neurotransmitter dopamine in the brain, producing feelings of pleasure and reward.
- A pack-a-day smoker takes 200 to 300 hits of nicotine daily. Most smokers quickly develop a tolerance for nicotine and soon need greater amounts to produce the desired effect.
- Addiction to tobacco can occur in less than two weeks. In fact, one study discovered that 10% of young smokers began to feel nicotine cravings within just two days of their first cigarette.
- In 2010, the U.S. Surgeon General stated that nicotine is as addictive as street drugs like heroin or cocaine.
- Less than 5% of smokers who try to quit are successful at any one time.
- People who start smoking before age 21 have a harder time quitting than all other smokers.



The Facts on Secondhand Smoke

Even non-smokers are exposed to two different kinds of secondhand smoke:

Mainstream smoke

is the smoke that has been inhaled and then exhaled by the smoker.



Sidestream smoke

is the unsmoked smoke from the burning end of a cigarette.



Sidestream smoke contains higher concentrations of carcinogens than mainstream smoke. Sidestream smoke also contains smaller particles, which are more easily absorbed into the body's cells.

Non-smokers who breathe in secondhand smoke take in nicotine and other toxic chemicals, just as smokers do.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

Nicotine Withdrawal

Nicotine dissipates from the body in just a few hours, producing unpleasant withdrawal symptoms that often prompt a smoker to light up again. People who decide to quit using tobacco must endure a number of withdrawal symptoms which may last from a few weeks to several months. They include:

- anxiety
- changes in appetite
- changes in heart rate
- cravings for tobacco
- depression
- dry mouth
- fatigue or drowsiness
- flu-like symptoms
- headaches
- heavy coughing
- hunger
- irritability
- lightheadedness
- nausea
- nervousness
- panic
- sleep disturbances
- sore throat
- sweating



IN THE NEWS:



An increasing number of environmental health researchers are studying **thirdhand smoke** (or THS)—the residual tobacco smoke that remains in the air and on the clothes, walls, carpets and other surfaces after a cigarette is smoked. Ongoing research by the National Institutes of Health suggests that THS lingers on surfaces for months, thus posing its own unique health risk to anyone who enters a room or car where smoking has occurred.

Less Hazardous?



If you think hookah smoke, herbal cigarettes and cigars are less hazardous than cigarettes, you're **WRONG!** These "alternative smoking products" cause heart disease, cancer and emphysema just as ordinary tobacco cigarettes do.

HOOCAH SMOKING, or smoking tobacco through a water pipe, is just as dangerous as smoking a cigarette. In fact, hookah smoke contains more nicotine, carbon monoxide and tar than regular cigarette smoke.

HERBAL CIGARETTES may contain catnip, jasmine, ginseng, clove or other natural flavorings. Although herbal cigarettes lack nicotine, their smoke often contains even more tar and toxic compounds than regular cigarettes do.



CIGARS including cigarillos and small cigars, contain the same carcinogenic compounds as cigarettes. They increase a person's risk of heart disease, lung cancer and various types of throat cancer. Secondhand smoke is extremely dangerous.

Tobacco and Death

Smoking is the leading cause of premature, preventable death in the United States.

- In the United States, tobacco use is responsible for nearly 1 in 5 deaths.
- More than 440,000 premature deaths each year are caused by cigarette smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke.
- According to the CDC, more deaths are caused each year by tobacco use than by all deaths from HIV, illegal drug use, alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides, and murders **COMBINED**.
- CDC estimates that 25 million Americans who are alive today will die prematurely from smoking-related illnesses, including 5 million people younger than 18 years of age.



Why Quit?



- You'll have more spending money when you stop buying cigarettes.
- No more stained teeth and smelly clothes.
- You won't expose your family and friends to secondhand smoke.
- You'll look and feel healthy, be energized and have more stamina.
- You'll live longer! Each cigarette smoked takes eight minutes off a smoker's life.

The Benefits of Quitting

Within 20 minutes of your last cigarette

- Your blood pressure returns to normal.
- Your pulse drops to its normal rate.
- The temperature of your hands and feet rises to normal.

Within 8 hours

- The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
- The oxygen level in your blood increases to normal.

Within 48 hours

- Your nerve endings start re-growing.
- Your ability to smell and taste is enhanced.

Within 72 hours

- The bronchial tubes relax, making breathing easier.
- Your lung capacity increases.

Within 3 months

- Your overall circulation improves.
- Lung function increases by up to 30%.

Within 1 - 9 months

- There is a decrease in coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath.
- Your energy level increases.
- Cilia re-grow in lungs, increasing the lungs' ability to handle mucus and reduce infection.

Within 5 years

- Lung cancer death rate for an average ex-smoker decreases to 72 people per 100,000.

Within 10 years

- Lung cancer death rates for an average ex-smoker drops to 12 deaths per 100,000.
- Pre-cancerous cells are replaced with healthy cells.



WARNING!

As of September 2012, all U.S. cigarette packaging is required to include one of nine prominent warnings, along with a large, full-color graphic about the negative health consequences of smoking.

WARNING: Cigarettes are addictive.

WARNING: Tobacco smoke can harm your children.

WARNING: Cigarettes cause fatal lung disease.

WARNING: Cigarettes cause cancer.

WARNING: Cigarettes cause strokes and heart disease.

WARNING: Smoking during pregnancy can harm your baby.

WARNING: Smoking can kill you.

WARNING: Tobacco smoke causes fatal lung disease in nonsmokers.

WARNING: Quitting smoking now greatly reduces serious risks to your health.



GETTING HELP

More than 40 million Americans have successfully quit smoking. The first step is to **SET A QUIT DATE**. Once you have made the decision to quit, you can begin to prepare yourself. These resources can provide tips on how to kick the nicotine habit:

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

American Heart Association
www.heart.org

American Lung Association
www.lungusa.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health
www.cdc.gov/tobacco

National Cancer Institute
www.smokefree.gov

North American Quitline Consortium
www.naquitline.org



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