

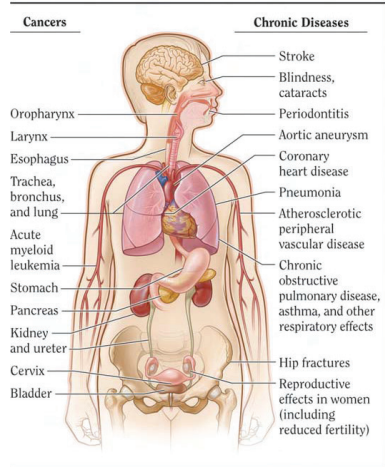
Dangers of Cigarette Smoking

Smoking can cause:

- Lung cancer, other related cancers
- Blood vessels to narrow
- Chronic lung diseases, more mucus produced
- Increases carbon monoxide in the lungs and blood

Smoking can damage your heart.

- Each of the above causes the heart to beat harder and faster.
- The heart has to work harder to get blood through the vessels.
- More smokers die of heart disease than lung disease.



More health problems caused by cigarette smoking:

- Cigarette smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke has become the leading cause of premature deaths in the United States. Of those premature deaths, about 36% are from cancer, 39% are from heart disease and stroke, and 24% are from lung disease such as COPD and lung cancer.
- Tobacco smoke contains over 7,000 toxic chemicals, including carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, arsenic, and cyanide. These chemicals are transferred from your lungs into your blood stream which increases your risk of a stroke.

Secondhand smoke can hurt you.

- **Five minutes** in a smoky room can cause your aorta (the main artery carrying blood from the heart) to stiffen as much as smoking a cigarette making your heart work harder to pump blood.
- **At twenty minutes**, your blood platelets (the cells that help your blood clot) are similar to someone who smokes a pack-a-day. "Sticky" platelets damage your heart and arteries which can lead to blood clots.
- **After thirty minutes**, your heart arteries show the same damage as a smoker, and your body's ability to handle bad cholesterol is decreased.

Read other side of this card for helpful suggestions on how you can quit smoking.

Steps to Quit Cigarette Smoking

Phase I: Preparing to Quit

- Mark a “quit” date on your calendar one week in advance.
- Keep track of the cigarettes you smoke by a slash mark on paper tucked in your pack.
- Every time you have the urge to light up, wait 10 minutes.
- Collect your cigarette butts in a bottle to see how much you really smoke in a week.

Phase II: Quitting (*this phase takes approximately two weeks*)

- Throw all cigarettes away and paraphernalia like matches, lighters, and ashtrays.
- Whenever you have an urge to smoke, take a deep breath through your mouth and slowly exhale through pursed lips. Repeat five to ten times.
- Change your routine. If you always light up when driving to work, take a different route. Substitute a walk for your usual coffee and cigarette break. Sit in a chair you don’t customarily use when relaxing or watching TV at home.
- Find activities you don’t associate with smoking. Enroll in a cooking class, visit a non-smoking friend, or go swimming.
- Keep your hands busy by holding something such as a pen, a ball, or a paper clip.
- Substitute cigarettes with other oral gratifications like gum or mints, toothpicks or coffee stirrers.
- Avoid drinking coffee and alcohol or eating foods high in sugar like candy or pastries. They cause changes in the body that increase your desire for a cigarette.
- Create a “ciggy bank” and put the money you used to spend on cigarettes in a jar and watch it add up.
- Place a rubber band on your wrist and snap it every time you get an urge to smoke.
- Challenge a close family member or friend who smokes to quit with you.

Phase III: Staying off Cigarettes (*allow three months for this final phase*)

- Always remember the craving to smoke will pass, whether you smoke or not.
- Renew your commitment to stay off cigarettes each day.
- Beware of saboteurs—usually other smokers—who may try to encourage you to light up. Assert your right not to smoke.
- Talk to a non-smoking friend for support.
- Make a list of good things you’ve noticed since you quit—food tastes better, you cough less, your clothes don’t smell bad, etc.
- Continue to practice the behavior modification techniques listed in the quitting phase.
- Decide, one day at a time, not to smoke.
- Ask family and friends not to smoke around you.
- Set goals that continue to cut down on the number of cigarettes you smoke daily.
- Watch your weight when you quit smoking.