

Can Smoking Be Good For You?

Is Smoking Harmless?

Of course not, but the question got your attention. Smoking is harmful and can lead to death. As awareness grows about the dangers of smoking, it has been restricted or banned in public places. It harms not only the smoker but also others who inhale the smoke "secondhand."

Harmful Consequences

The habit of smoking comes along with harmful consequences to every organ in the body. Smoking causes lung cancer, which kills more men and women than any other form of cancer. Smoking has also been proven to cause chronic lung diseases such as asthma, emphysema, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), bronchitis, and pneumonia. Smokers almost always have a hacking cough and shortness of breath. Smoking compromises the immune system, resulting in longer healing times for just about any ailment.

Smoking colors teeth and fingernails yellow. It gives smokers bad breath and damages teeth and gums. Smokers are more likely to get gum disease and oral cancer. Smokers also may develop loss of bone density, causing bones to break more easily. Smoking can impact sexual health and fertility. Women who smoke and take hormone-based birth control may increase their risk of serious health problems, such as heart attacks.

What If I Quit?

All forms of tobacco—cigarettes, pipes, cigars and smokeless tobacco—are hazardous. It doesn't help to substitute other tobacco products that may seem less harmless such as "filtered" or "low tar." The only way to avoid the consequences of smoking is to take action to go smoke-free. Quitting smoking has immediate as well as long-term benefits, reducing risks for diseases caused by smoking and improving health in general. Lung function, blood circulation, and high blood pressure begin to improve soon after that last cigarette.

Kicking the Habit

If you can't quit for yourself, quit for your spouse, children, and grandchildren. Quitting the addiction may take more than one try and may require a solid plan for success. There are many resources for people who want to quit. Different approaches work for different people. Sometimes quitting "cold turkey" is best. Others find it helps to attend a support group sponsored by local hospitals or organizations such as the American Cancer Society. The South Dakota Department of Health (1-866-SD-QUITS (1-866-737-8487)) also has a tobacco cessation program to help in this very difficult task.



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Tips to Quit



- Choose a day to stop smoking.
- Keep reminding yourself why you want to quit. Write your reasons for quitting and refer to them when you are tempted to smoke.
- Drink water, suck on ice, chew sugarless gum, or eat a piece of fruit when you have the urge to smoke.
- Get moving. Get busy walking, doing housework, or taking deep breaths. Soon the urge to smoke will pass.
- Take up new hobbies to keep your hands busy.
- Tell everyone you know that you are quitting and develop a network of family members, co-workers, and friends who support your efforts.

Don't start the process by thinking about quitting for a lifetime, think of it as quitting one day at a time. Staying smoke free will give you a whole lot more of everything—more energy, better performance, better looks, more money in your pocket and, in the long run, more life to live!

Visit these websites for more information:

www.webmd.com/smoking-cessation/quitting-tobacco-use-overview

www.cancer.org

<http://www.befreesd.com>

or

Call toll free 1-866-SD-QUITS (1-866-737-8487)