

WHY QUIT - SMOKING?

**“Smoking – is the number one preventable cause of death and disease.
People who continue to smoke will die early because of their smoking”**

Why quit using cigars, pipes, or spit tobacco?

You can get lung cancer and cancers of the throat and mouth from using cigars, pipes, or spit tobacco.

- **Health risks related to smoking cigars or pipes:** Even if you think you do not inhale the smoke from a pipe or cigar, you are at greater risk for disease. Quitting reduces these risks in much the same way as in quitting cigarettes.
- **Health risks related to spit tobacco:** Chewing tobacco (“chew”) and snuff (“dip” or “rub”) give you a higher risk of mouth cancer, gum disease, and tooth loss when you use these products.

Why (teens) should quit?

Avoiding diseases caused by tobacco and being in control of your life are good reasons for teens quit.

If you have been a teen who smokes, chews tobacco, or uses snuff, he probably already knows that tobacco is bad for him. Most teens intend to quit at some point, but may not feel it’s very important to quit now. But the longer you use tobacco, the greater your risk for becoming addicted to it. Once you’re hooked, it’s even harder to quit.

No matter how old you are when you quit smoking you will decrease your risk of:

- **Heart attack and stroke:** Smoking even a few cigarettes a day (1 to 4) increases your risk of coronary artery disease. If a person who smokes has a heart attack, his or her risk of sudden death is twice as great as the risk of a person who does not smoke.

As soon as you quit smoking, your risk of heart attack and stroke begins to decrease. If you already have coronary artery disease, your risk of a second heart attack and possible sudden death decreases when you quit smoking.

People who quit smoking before age 50 reduce by half their risk of dying in the next 15 years compared with continuing smokers.

- **Lung cancer and other lung diseases.** After 10 years of not smoking, your risk of lung cancer is reduced by 30% to 50%. If you have asthma, you may have fewer and less severe asthma attacks. You will also have fewer respiratory illnesses, such as colds, flu and pneumonia.
- **Other cancers.** After you quit, your risk for developing cancers of the voice box (larynx), mouth, throat, esophagus, intestines, bladder, kidney, and pancreas gradually declines.
- **Impotence and fertility problems.** Men who quit smoking are less likely to develop problems achieving and maintaining an erection. Women who quit smoking are less likely to have problems becoming pregnant.

- **Gum disease and other dental problems.** Smoking can lead to gum (periodontal) disease. People who smoke are twice as likely to lose teeth as people who do not smoke.
- **Early death.** No matter how old you are or how long you've been smoking, quitting reduces your risk for developing life-threatening health problems.

In addition to reducing your risk of diseases in the future, you will notice some immediate benefits after you stop using tobacco. Your shortness of breath and asthma symptoms will likely get better within the first 2 to 4 weeks after you quit.

On the other hand, you may temporarily cough more in the first week after you quit because your lungs are trying to clear themselves.

- Health risks for your family members caused by secondhand smoke are reduced when you quit smoking.
- Underweight babies and problem pregnancies are less likely in women who quit smoking.

Natural, low-tar, and low-nicotine cigarettes are not any safer to smoke than regular cigarettes. Do not be misled into thinking these products are any better for you.