

The Truth About TOBACCO



Tobacco is an Addictive Drug

You may not think of cigarettes and other forms of tobacco as drugs because they're legal to use once you're 18 or 21 years old, depending on where you live. But tobacco has a lot of chemicals that affect the body. One major chemical is called nicotine, a substance that excites the parts of the brain that make you feel good. You can get addicted to nicotine just like other drugs. And tobacco isn't healthy for you at any age. Tobacco is smoked in cigarettes, cigars, and pipes (such as hookas—or water pipes). It can also be ground up into a brown powder called snuff. Snuff can be chewed or held in the mouth between the cheek and the gums, and some snuff is sniffed up the nose. When you use tobacco, the nicotine quickly gives you a mild rush of pleasure and energy. But it soon wears off, which makes you want to use it more. Sometimes, the rush of energy that comes with nicotine can make you nervous and edgy. All forms of tobacco are dangerous to your health.

WHAT'S THE TRUTH ABOUT VAPING?

Electronic cigarettes, also called e-cigarettes, are battery-operated devices. They bring flavored nicotine to the lungs without burning tobacco. When you puff on it, the device makes vapor from the liquid in the cartridge, which is inhaled (called "vaping"). Although e-cigarettes don't create smoke, they still have nicotine and other possibly harmful chemicals. Testing of some e-cigarette products found the vapor to contain known cancer-causing and toxic chemicals, and particles from the vaporizing mechanism that may be harmful. The health effects of repeated exposure to these chemicals are not yet clear.



Smoking is the Leading Cause of Preventable Death

- On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers. Smoking leads to disease and disability and harms nearly every organ of the body. More than 16 million Americans are living with a disease caused by smoking. For every person who dies because of smoking, at least 30 people live with a serious smoking-related illness.
- Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, stroke, lung diseases, diabetes, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Smoking also increases risk for tuberculosis, certain eye diseases, and problems of the immune system, including rheumatoid arthritis. Smoking is a known cause of erectile dysfunction in males.
- Worldwide, tobacco use causes nearly 6 million deaths per year, and current trends show that tobacco use will cause more than 8 million deaths annually by 2030.
- Cigarette smoking is responsible for more than 480,000 deaths per year in the United States, including nearly 42,000 deaths resulting from secondhand smoke exposure. This is about one in five deaths annually, or 1,300 deaths every day.
- If smoking continues at the current rate among U.S. youth, 5.6 million of today's Americans younger than 18 years of age are expected to die prematurely from a smoking-related illness. This represents about one in every 13 Americans aged 17 years or younger who are alive today.



I'm Hooked! How Do I Quit?

FOR QUIT HELP: Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669), a national toll-free number that can help people get the information they need to quit smoking. Or, visit SmokeFree.gov.

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FUNDED BY A GRANT FROM THE ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

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