

Chapter 6: Tobacco Use

You can help your heart by living a healthy lifestyle.

People who smoke cigarettes are 2 to 4 times more likely to develop heart disease than people who do not smoke. They are at an increased risk for heart attack, stroke, circulatory problems, cancer and lung disorders.

What's In Tobacco

Did You Know

Smokeless tobacco contains *a lot* of sugar. This can make it harder to control your glucose levels.

Nicotine has effects like both caffeine (“upper”) and alcohol (“downer”).

Cigarette smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals. More than 70 can cause cancer.

Tobacco products include cigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS, includes e-cigarettes and JUUL®), smokeless tobacco (dip or chew), cigars, hookahs and pipes.

Using tobacco exposes your body to chemicals such as:

- benzene (fuel additive)
- formaldehyde (embalming fluid)
- cyanide and arsenic (poisons)
- methanol (wood alcohol)
- acetylene (fuel)
- ammonia (cleaning fluid)
- acetone (nail polish remover)
- carbon monoxide (poisonous gas).

E-cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes or e-cigs), JUUL®, hookah pens, vapes, vaporizers, vape pens, e-hookah, e-pens, e-pipes, e-cigars and disposables are all known as electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS).

Safety concerns

- E-cigarettes are not safe. They are a tobacco product.
- The chemicals used in the liquid do not have to be safe, and they are seldom fully listed.
- It is common for there to be more or less nicotine than what is listed on the label.
- E-cigarettes have become very popular very quickly. This means there has not been time to get results from long-term studies on the safety or health effects of e-cigarettes.

- A 2018 public health research report supported by the FDA confirms that using ENDS products is harmful. Use causes health and safety problems and greatly increases tobacco addiction among adolescents.
- The name of the report is “Public Health Consequences of E-cigarettes” by the National Academies of Science, Engineering, Medicine (NASEM).”

E-cigarettes and quitting smoking

The FDA has not approved e-cigarettes as a way to quit smoking. According to the 2018 NASEM report, there is “limited” evidence that e-cigarettes help some people to quit smoking. Many people return to smoking, continue to use the e-cigarette, or use both. None of these options is healthful.

What Tobacco Does To Your Heart

Did You Know

Tobacco use is the most preventable cause of death in the U.S.

Cigarette smoking is the most common form of nicotine addiction in the U.S.

Tobacco use is especially dangerous to your blood vessels and arteries. It can cause atherosclerosis, a build-up of plaque (fatty substances found in your blood). Over time, the plaque hardens and narrows your blood vessels and arteries.

Smoking also makes the blood vessels and arteries sticky. This leads to “obstructions” in blood flow, meaning that your blood cannot flow easily. The side effects of using tobacco can result in needing stents, coronary artery bypass surgery or both to keep your blood vessels and arteries open. It can also lead to heart attack or stroke.

Tobacco use:

- causes heart disease and stroke
- increases your heart rate
- increases your blood pressure
- lowers your good (HDL) cholesterol
- can cause irregular heart beats
- makes your heart work harder (adding stress to scarred or weakened blood vessels and arteries)
- can interfere with how well your heart medicines work
- causes heartburn and peptic ulcers
- can delay healing from surgery.

A damaged heart has to try to cope with the effects of tobacco. Quitting smoking and avoiding secondhand smoke can help reverse heart and blood vessel damage and reduce your heart disease risk.

What Secondhand Smoke Does To Your Body

Secondhand smoke is a mixture of smoke coming from the burning tips of cigarettes, pipes and cigars and smoke exhaled by smokers.

Did You Know?

The only way to protect your family from secondhand smoke is to live in a smoke-free environment. No amount of secondhand smoke is safe.

Anyone around secondhand smoke breathes in the chemicals from the tobacco smoke. Secondhand smoke causes death and disease in people who do not smoke.

- Secondhand smoke can cause health problems for adults who do not smoke. Each year, secondhand smoke causes about 34,000 deaths from heart disease.
- Even briefly breathing secondhand smoke can damage the lining of blood vessels and cause your blood to become stickier. These changes can cause a deadly heart attack.
- Breathing secondhand smoke can:
 - irritate and damage the lining of your airways
 - trigger symptoms such as cough, phlegm, wheezing and breathlessness.

How Your Body Heals After Quitting Smoking

The benefits of quitting happen right away and last for many years.

Did You Know?

In 1 year of quitting smoking, your risk of heart disease is reduced by more than half. Quitting also reduces the risk of a second heart attack if you've already had one.

(Source: National Institutes of Health)

- **8 hours:** The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal. The oxygen level in your blood increases to normal.
- **24 hours:** Your chance of a heart attack decreases.
- **48 hours:** Nerve endings start to grow again. Your senses of smell and taste improve.
- **2 weeks:** Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.
- **1 to 9 months:** Your cough, stuffy nose, and shortness of breath decrease. Your energy level increases.
- **1 year:** Your chance of heart disease is cut in half.
- **5 years:** Your chance of a stroke is the same as a nonsmoker. Your chance of dying from lung cancer is cut in half.
- **5 to 10 years:** Normal cells replace pre-cancerous cells.
- **10 years:** Your risk of cancer, stroke, and heart disease is close to the same of someone who has never used tobacco.

(Source: World Health Organization)

Quitting Tobacco Use

Quitting may be hard but it is not impossible. To get help quitting, talk with a member of your health care team.

Remember

Tobacco does not give you “permission” to have time for yourself, to take a break or relax. You can do all of those without using tobacco.

Tip

If you do slip and use tobacco, do not be too hard on yourself. Return to quitting right away. Write down what the situation was that led to the tobacco use and learn from the experience.

Preparing to quit

- Make a pact with yourself to quit.
- Write down your three most important reasons for quitting on a card. Carry the card with you or post it on your refrigerator, desk or mirror and look at it several times a day.
- Make your home tobacco-free to reduce your triggers and make it a safe place for your body to heal. For example, most people do not expect to smoke in a restaurant anymore because they’ve grown used to it.
- “See” yourself as someone who does not use tobacco.
- Think about new ways to relax or take a break. Plan your reward for each day you do not use tobacco. Keep them small, easy and affordable.

Actually quitting

- Get rid of your tobacco products. Throw away your cigarettes, ashtrays and lighters.
- Do not allow smoking in your home. If other family members want to smoke, ask them to go outside. It is not safe for anyone to breathe secondhand smoke.
- You may need to temporarily avoid “high risk” situations: parties, smoking environments, social situations, seasonal activities (such as hunting, fishing and campfires). Plan ahead on how to cope with those triggers.
- Think positively. Believe you can quit. You were not born using tobacco. Your body will remember how live without it.
- Even the most intense cravings can only last up to 15 minutes. Most cravings last for 3 to 5 minutes, and often it is only a challenging 30 seconds. Time your cravings to get a sense of how long they actually last. Wait it out and tell yourself “this too shall pass.”

Quitting aids

Consider talking with your health care provider about medicines approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to help you quit. They have been proven to increase your chances of being successful:

- over-the-counter products include nicotine gum, nicotine lozenge and the nicotine patch
- prescription products include Chantix™, Zyban®, nicotine nasal spray and nicotine inhaler.

Resources For Quitting



***There may be a cost to you.
Check with your insurance provider.**

Allina Health

- Tobacco Intervention Program at Abbott Northwestern Hospital
— 612-863-1648
- Tobacco Intervention Program at Mercy Hospital
— 763-236-8008
- Tobacco Intervention Program at River Falls Area Hospital
— 715-307-6075
- *United Hospital Lung and Sleep Clinic Tobacco Cessation Program
— 651-726-6200
- *Penny George™ Institute for Health and Healing (LiveWell Center) tobacco intervention coaching
— 612-863-5178

Other

- Quit Partner
 - 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or quitpartnermn.com
- Minnesota Department of Health
 - health.state.mn.us/quit
- online tobacco cessation support
 - smokefree.gov
- American Lung Association
 - 651-227-8014 or freedomfromsmoking.org
- Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center's Residential Treatment Program
 - 1-800-344-5984 or 1-507-266-1930
- Chantix® GetQuit Support plan
 - 1-877-CHANTIX (1-877-242-6849) or get-quit.com
- financial aid for Chantix® or Nicotrol® inhaler
 - 1-866-706-2400 or pfizerrxpathways.com
- Plant Extracts aromatherapy
 - 1-877-999-4236