

STOPPING SMOKING

Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. If you have a chest condition the most important thing you can do for yourself is to stop smoking.

This factsheet will explain the risks and provide information about how to stop. At first it may feel overwhelming to think about stopping.

Don't waste time feeling guilty about the past. Think about the future.

- **First of all you need to make the decision that you really want to stop.**
- **Then get all the help and support you need to give up.**
- **You can do it!**

You are not alone!

What smoking does to your body

- If you have a chest condition smoking will make your symptoms worse.
- Smoking makes the smooth lining of blood vessels rough. This encourages the build up of atheroma, the fatty material that narrows and blocks blood vessels.
- Smoking increases the amount of fibrinogen (blood thickening agent) in the blood and makes it stickier. This increases the chance of blood clots forming that can cause heart attacks and strokes.
- Smoking also increases blood pressure and speeds up the heart.
- Apart from the increased likelihood of heart disease and strokes, smoking also damages the lungs causing chronic lung disease and increases the risk of many cancers.
- Smoking a cigarette releases thousands of chemicals. These include at least 80 cancer-causing chemicals (carcinogens); hundreds of poisons and the highly addictive drug nicotine

Poisonous substances found in cigarettes

The ingredients listed on a cigarette packet are not the only ingredients found in cigarettes or produced by smoking cigarettes. Cigarette smoke contains over 4000 chemicals. Most of these are highly poisonous and many are cancer causing. It is really quite amazing that the public can buy such a harmful product over the counter.



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Poisonous substances found in cigarettes

ARSENIC Rat poison	FORMALDEHYDE Embalming fluid	METHANOL Rocket fuel
ACETIC ACID Hair dye & developer	HYDRALAZINE Used in jet & rocket fuels	NAPHTHALENES Used in explosives, moth balls & paint pigments
ACETONE Paint & nail varnish remover	HEXAMINE BBQ lighter	NICKLES Used in electroplating
AMMONIA Household cleaner	PHENOL Used in disinfectants & plastics	BENZENE Rubber cement
POLONIUM Radiation dose equal to 300 chest x-rays in one year		BUTANE Lighter fluid
STEARIC ACID Candle wax	CADMINIUM Found in batteries & oil paint	STYRENE Found in insulation materials
CARBON MONOXIDE Car exhaust fumes	HYDROGEN CYANIDE Poison used in gas chambers	TAR Road surfaces
CARBON TETRACHLORIDE Dry cleaning fluid	LEAD Found in batteries	TOLENE Found in embalming glue
ETHANOL Alcohol	METHANE Swamp gas	

The moment you stop smoking the risks to your health start to decline.

How long does it take to gain health benefits

- 20 minutes after quitting, your blood pressure and pulse return to normal.
- 48 hours: no nicotine is left in your body. Your senses of taste and smell are greatly improved.
- 72 hours: your breathing becomes easier and your energy levels increase.
- 2–12 weeks: your circulation improves and exercise can be easier.
- 3–9 months: any coughs, wheezing and breathing problems improve.
- Within five years the risk of heart attack is halved.
- Within 10 years the risk of lung cancer is halved and the risk of heart attack is at the same level as non-smokers.
- Medium to long term: stopping smoking at any age increases your life expectancy, provided you stop before the onset of serious illness.
- If you have developed an illness, you will still benefit from stopping.

Financial benefits

These figures are based on a 20-a-day smoker paying £6.30 per packet of 20 cigarettes.

After:

- 1 day: £6.30 = a movie rental or a few magazines
- 1 week: £44.10 = a facial, a cheap flight, paintballing, a day at the races
- 1 month: £189 = a shopping spree or premiership football tickets
- 3 months: £567 = holiday or a new laptop / TV
- 6 months: £1,134 = football season ticket, a family holiday or a home cinema, top of the range bicycle
- 1 year: £2,299 = a new kitchen, a second hand car or a luxury leather suite

You can use an on-line cost calculator at www.canstopsmoking.com to find out how much smoking is costing you financially.

Personal benefits

As well as the health and financial reasons, you will benefit in other ways too:

- Freedom from an addictive habit.
- No more smelly breath, clothes and home.
- Being a good role model for children.
- A sense of well-being.
- The ability to do more exercise.

Tips to help you stop

- Decide that you really want to stop.
- Prepare to stop: work out your smoking habits and be ready to make changes to your daily routines.
- Some people put on weight when they stop smoking so plan how you could manage this.
- Set a date and stick to it: if you want their support, tell family and friends.
- Accept that smoking is a habit as well as an addiction. Very few smokers are just physically addicted to nicotine. Sometimes it can be an unconscious habit.
- Break the habit: to do this you must be aware of why you are smoking and when you smoke. Keep a smoking diary to tell you this then try and change your routine as you stop. Try and find a new activity to keep your hands occupied.
- Think about why smoking has been a part of your life. You may feel that it has helped you in some way e.g. to relax or as a source of comfort or stimulation. How can you replace smoking? Do you need a distraction or find another way to relax.
- When you feel the urge to smoke try to distract yourself. For example, brush your teeth, get some fresh air or do something to take your mind off it.

- Seek professional help and support. Ask your doctor about what support is available to help you. Most areas have specialist smoking cessation nurses who run groups and / or offer one-to-one support.

Different approaches to giving up smoking suit different people. There is a lot of help and support available to help you. You do not need to do it on your own. Seeking support is not a sign of weakness: it is a sign that you really do want to stop smoking.

You are four times more likely to quit smoking with professional support and prescribed medicines such as nicotine replacement therapy.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

The nicotine is the addictive substance found in cigarettes, it is this that gives you the craving to smoke and the unpleasant withdrawal symptoms when you stop. Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can help with this. NRT is available to buy from pharmacies and also on prescription.

NRT comes in a variety of forms and in various strengths:

- Patches
- Gum
- Inhalators
- Micro tabs
- Nasal sprays

Always seek the help of your doctor or pharmacist before using NRT.

Medication

There are two drugs available, on prescription that are designed to help people stop smoking. However, there are a variety of reasons why they may not be suitable for you, so it is important to discuss this fully with your doctor.

- Zyban ® (bupropion): this drug treatment changes your brain's response to nicotine. It makes smoking less pleasurable, reduces craving and can double your chance of succeeding.
- Champix ® (varenicline): a non-nicotine treatment that works by providing relief from cravings and withdrawal symptoms. It also makes smoking unpleasant. Studies have shown that it can increase the odds for stopping successfully by up to four times.
- **Smokeline 0800 84 84 84:**
Freephone helpline 9am–9pm
Location of your nearest free stop smoking service. Access to specialist counsellors.
Further information.
- **www.canstopsmoking.com:**
On-line information and support.
Text phone support and live on-line chat with a Smokeline advisor.

If you would like to speak to one of our nurses in confidence,
please call the Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland Advice Line

Monday - Friday 9.30am - 4.00pm

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