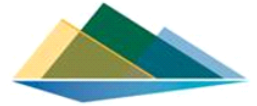


#smoking
#publichealth5-19service



SMOKING FACTSHEET

This factsheet will provide you with information about the effects of smoking and helpful tips and links on how to become smoke free.

“My parents and my friends smoke, I don’t really want to smoke but I am addicted now”

Young people who live with parents or siblings who smoke are up to three times more likely to become smokers themselves than children of non-smoking households. There has been a decline in children who regularly smoke, rates among 15 year olds fell from 20% in 2006 to 7% in 2016 (www.ash.org.uk). The younger the age of taking up smoking, the greater the harm is likely to be because early uptake is associated with heavier smoking in adult years, higher addiction and less chance of quitting, and higher deaths due to smoking related illnesses.

How does smoking affect you? (Information from www.ash.org.uk & www.nhs.uk/smokefree)

- **Smoking causes ageing of the skin.** Smoking prematurely ages skin by between 10 and 20 years and increases the likelihood of facial wrinkling, particularly around the eyes and mouth. Smoking restricts the amount of blood flowing to the skin, depleting the skin of oxygen and essential nutrients.
- **Smoking clogs the arteries and causes heart attacks and strokes.** Smokers are almost twice as likely to have a heart attack compared with people who have never smoked. Carbon monoxide from the smoke and nicotine both put a strain on the heart by making it work faster. They also increase your risk of blood clots. Other chemicals in cigarette smoke damage the lining of your coronary arteries, leading to furring of the arteries.
- **Smoking harms the lungs.** Cigarette smoke can trigger asthma or worsen asthma symptoms as asthma airways are more sensitive to tobacco smoke. Smoking can cause diseases such as lung cancer, pneumonia, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (a chronic progressive disease that narrows airways and destroys lung tissues). Smoking causes 84% of deaths from lung cancer and 83% of deaths from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Quitting smoking reduces the risk of lung cancer compared to continuing to smoke. It can also reduce the severity of symptoms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease although cannot reverse the disease itself. The sooner a smoker stops the better. Smoking can cause a slow and painful death. Chronic obstructive lung disease is a progressively disabling disease – breathlessness only becomes troublesome when about half of the lung has been destroyed.
- **Smoking is highly addictive, don’t start.** Nicotine is a highly addictive and fast acting drug, reaching the brain 7-10 seconds after a smoker inhales. It increases the heart rate and blood pressure and can affect mood and behaviour. However, nicotine itself is not

carcinogenic; it is the tar and other toxins within a cigarette that can cause cancers and other serious diseases. Nicotine replacement products are available on prescription from the NHS and can double a smoker's chance of successfully quitting by helping them cope with cravings.

- **Smokers die younger.** Tobacco is the only legally available consumer product that kills people when it is used entirely as intended. Around half of all life-long smokers will die prematurely and on average, cigarette smokers die 10 years younger than non-smokers.
- **Smoking can damage the sperm and decreases fertility.** Smoking can cause reduced volume of ejaculation, lowered sperm count, abnormal sperm shape and impaired sperm motility (ability to swim and penetrate the egg). Smoking may reduce the blood flow to the penis and cause impotence.
- **Smoking contains benzene, nitrosamines, formaldehyde and hydrogen cyanide.** Benzene is also used as a solvent in fuel and in chemical manufacture. Formaldehyde is highly poisonous and used to preserve dead bodies. Hydrogen cyanide is an industrial pollutant. Other chemicals found in tobacco smoke include acetone (nail polish remover), ammonia (found in strong-cleaning fluids), arsenic (rat poison) and cadmium (highly poisonous metal used in batteries).
- **Smoking can cause gum-disease and tooth loss.** As well as staining tooth enamel yellow and causing halitosis (bad breath).
- **Smoking when pregnant may harm your baby.** With each cigarette a pregnant woman smokes, the blood flow through the placenta is reduced for about 15 minutes, causing the baby's heart rate to increase. Smoking deprives the baby of oxygen, reducing baby movements for up to thirty minutes after the mother has smoked a single cigarette. Women who smoke during pregnancy are at a greater risk of miscarriage, premature birth, stillbirth and illness, and it increases the risk of cot death by at least 25%.

TOP TIPS ABOUT QUIT SMOKING

Tip 1: **Delay the first cigarette of the day** by 5-10 mins everyday till eventually it's much later in the day until you have your first one

Tip 2: **Replace cigarettes with exercise**; try taking a walk to distract you from the craving. This will help you to start associating not smoking with being fitter

Tip 3: **Make a list of reasons to quit** to remind yourself why you want to stop

Tip 4: **Make a quit smoking plan** and stick to it. NHS Smokefree can help provide a personalised plan and you can sign up to quitting advice and tips at <https://quitnow.smokefree.nhs.uk/>

Tip 5: **Download the NHS Smokefree App**

Tip 6: **Visit your GP or Pharmacist for advice** on nicotine replacement therapy

Tip 7: **There is growing evidence that e-cigarettes can help** people stop smoking. Using an e-cigarette can help you manage your nicotine cravings. For more advice ask at your local stop smoking service (details can be found at www.nhs.uk/smokefree/help-and-advice/local-support-services-helplines#)

Tip 8: **Get some support from family and friends**, if any of them smoke suggest they could quit with you

Tip 9: **Prepare an excuse**; it's a good idea to have something ready to say when you're offered a cigarette such as "cigarettes costs me £xx per year. I'm quitting so I can get myself a new phone..."

Tip 10: **Think positive** and stick to your plan

VISIT THESE USEFUL WEBSITES

www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/quitting-smoking-under-18s-guide/

NHS webpage that provides information and advice about quit smoking for young people

www.nhs.uk/smokefree

A really useful site to find out how stopping smoking will change your life for the better.

www.ash.org.uk/stopping-smoking/quitting-smoking/stopping-smoking-links

Action on smoking and health website has links to other resources and websites to provide information around the effects of smoking and how to quit.

www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/

NHS webpage providing advice about stop smoking.

www.bhf.org.uk/heart-matters-magazine/wellbeing/stop-smoking/smoking-tips

Information by British Heart Foundation provides advice about stop smoking and links to support services and forums.

www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/you-your-body/drugs-alcohol-smoking/smoking/

Webpage from Childline with information about effects of smoking and quitting