

Smoking Tobacco Information

Definition

- Information on tobacco.
- Includes facts, myths, health risks, prevention, and trusted resources.
- For information on vaping (e-cigarettes), see that specific handout.

Health Information

Overview

- Tobacco is a plant.
- Tobacco contains an addictive drug, nicotine.
- Tobacco can be smoked in cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and hookahs (water pipes).

Symptoms

- Nicotine can cause a fast heart rate, high blood pressure, or anxious feelings.
- Young children who accidentally ingest nicotine will throw up.
- In large overdoses, young children can have seizures. They may go into a coma or even die.

Care Advice

1. Key Points

- Smoking tobacco is a common way of using nicotine.
- Smoking tobacco can lead to nicotine addiction.
- It's important to understand the health risks of tobacco.
- Secondhand smoke is a health risk for nonsmokers.
- Here's some information that can help.

2. Health Risks of Smoking Tobacco

- Smoking tobacco is bad for your health.
- It causes lung diseases such as lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- It causes cancer in many parts of the body, not just the lungs.
- It causes mouth problems such as tooth loss and gum disease.
- It makes your skin more wrinkly and yellow.
- It increases your risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

3. Secondhand Smoke

- Secondhand smoke is the smoke from the burning tip of a cigarette, cigar or pipe. The smoker's mouth, skin or clothes also give off secondhand smoke.
- Secondhand smoke is bad for your health. It also causes heart disease, lung disease, and cancer.
- In children, secondhand smoke causes more frequent respiratory infections. This includes lung infections, ear infections, sinus infections, and asthma attacks. It also makes the symptoms last longer.
- It can also lead to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Prevention: never smoke in your home or car.

4. **Teens and Smoking**

- Nicotine is very addictive.
- Flavored cigarettes, such as menthol cigarettes, are more often used by teens.
- Starting smoking at a young age increases the chance you'll continue smoking in adulthood. The longer you smoke, the higher your risk of cancer and lung disease.
- Nicotine addiction can affect learning, attention, and your mental health.

5. **Myths About Smoking**

- **"Nicotine isn't addictive."** Nicotine is addictive. The more you use it, or the earlier you start, the more addictive it is.
- **"I can quit smoking easily."** It can be hard to stop using nicotine. Addiction happens quickly. You may need help from your doctor or a therapist.
- **"Smoking light cigarettes is safe."** Smoking "light" (extra filtered) cigarettes is still dangerous. You still get addicted to nicotine and inhale dangerous chemicals.
- **"Smoking only affects the lungs."** Smoking harms your whole body, especially your stomach, brain, heart, and skin.
- **"Smoking a couple cigarettes is not bad."** Even a little smoking can increase your risk of cancer and other health problems.
- **"Quitting won't help - the damage is done."** The sooner you quit smoking, the sooner you can reverse the bad health effects.

6. **Accidental Nicotine Ingestion in Children: Prevention**

- Treat nicotine products in the home like medicines or alcohol.
- Keep nicotine locked up, out of sight, and out of reach of children.
- Don't smoke around children, especially in the same room or car. Reason: the smoke isn't good for their health. They may also think it's safe for them to use.

7. **Smoking and Teens: Prevention**

- Talk to your teen about smoking. Start discussions before age 14.
- Set clear rules and expectations about smoking and other nicotine use. Avoid lecturing, judgment, or anger.
- Share the health risks of smoking. Remind them it can keep them from doing their best in school and sports.
- Support your teen in making good choices. Let them know it's fine to say no or walk away.
- Talk about ways they can resist peer pressure. Brainstorm or role play with them. Help them find the right words to say no. Suggest alternatives to smoking.
- Help them stay away from people who are smoking. Tell them you will always give them a ride home.
- Listen to your teen's questions about smoking. If you can't answer them, use one of the resources below.

8. **Trusted Smoking Resources**

- **U.S. QUITLINE.** Free coaching over the phone to help quit smoking and vaping. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or go to <https://smokefree.gov/>.
- **Canada Smokers' Helpline.** Free confidential advice and coaching over the phone to help quit smoking and vaping. Call 1-877-513-5333 or go to <https://smokershelpline.ca/>.

Call Your Doctor If

- You are concerned about your teen's smoking
- You are concerned about your own smoking
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

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