



Tobacco and Cancer Fact Sheet

for Patients and Caregivers



Tobacco use is the most preventable cause of cancer and cancer death in the US. Cigarette smoking increases the risk of at least 12 cancers and causes about 30% of all cancer deaths.

Tobacco and Your Health

There is no safe way to use tobacco. All types of tobacco products contain chemicals that can be harmful to your health. Tobacco smoke is made up of thousands of chemicals, and many are known to cause heart disease, lung disease, and cancer. Breathing in even small amounts of tobacco smoke can be harmful.

E-cigarettes, or vaping devices, do not contain tobacco, but they can contain nicotine and give off an aerosol that may contain harmful chemicals. The longer someone uses any tobacco product, the more risk to their health.

Cancer Risk

People who smoke cigarettes, cigars, and pipes have a higher risk of certain cancers. Using smokeless tobacco, such as chewing tobacco, snuff and nicotine pouches, can also cause certain cancers. Some cancers caused by using tobacco include:

- Lung
- Mouth, nasal cavity, larynx, throat, esophagus
- Cervix
- Kidney, liver, bladder, pancreas, stomach, colon, rectum
- Acute myeloid leukemia

Breathing in smoke from someone else's cigarette, cigar or pipe, and the smoke they breathe out (secondhand smoke) can also increase your risk for lung, voice box, throat, sinuses, and breast cancer. Secondhand smoke can also cause lung and heart diseases. And children who are exposed to secondhand smoke have an increased risk of lymphoma, leukemia, and brain tumors.

Lowering Tobacco-related Cancer Risks

You can lower your risk for cancer and other health problems by not using or quitting tobacco products. You should also avoid secondhand smoke. Making cars, homes, workplaces, and other buildings smoke free can help you and people around you avoid exposure, too. Most secondhand smoke exposure for children and adults occurs in the home.

Quitting at any age can help you live longer. This might also be true even if you have been diagnosed with cancer. The sooner you quit, the the more likely that you can lower your risk of getting certain cancers.

Quitting Tobacco

Quitting tobacco is not easy. There are different ways to quit, and using more than one usually works best. Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), medicines, and counseling have all helped people quit and stay tobacco free. If you use any kind of tobacco, talk to your doctor about a quit plan that will work best for you.

All US states have telephone quitlines. Also, some private and public health insurance plans cover some or all of the costs for people who want to quit tobacco.



To learn more about avoiding tobacco, visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org/quittobacco or call us at **1-800-227-2345**. We're here when you need us.

