



TOBACCO USE FACT SHEET

Tobacco is extremely harmful and there is no safe level of exposure to it. While cigarette smoking is the most widespread form of tobacco use, other tobacco products such as water pipe tobacco, various smokeless tobacco products, cigars, roll-your-own tobacco and pipe tobacco are also harmful.

Scientific research has proven that the tobacco industry produces and promotes a product that is addictive and causes diseases such as lung, throat and tongue cancer as well as death.

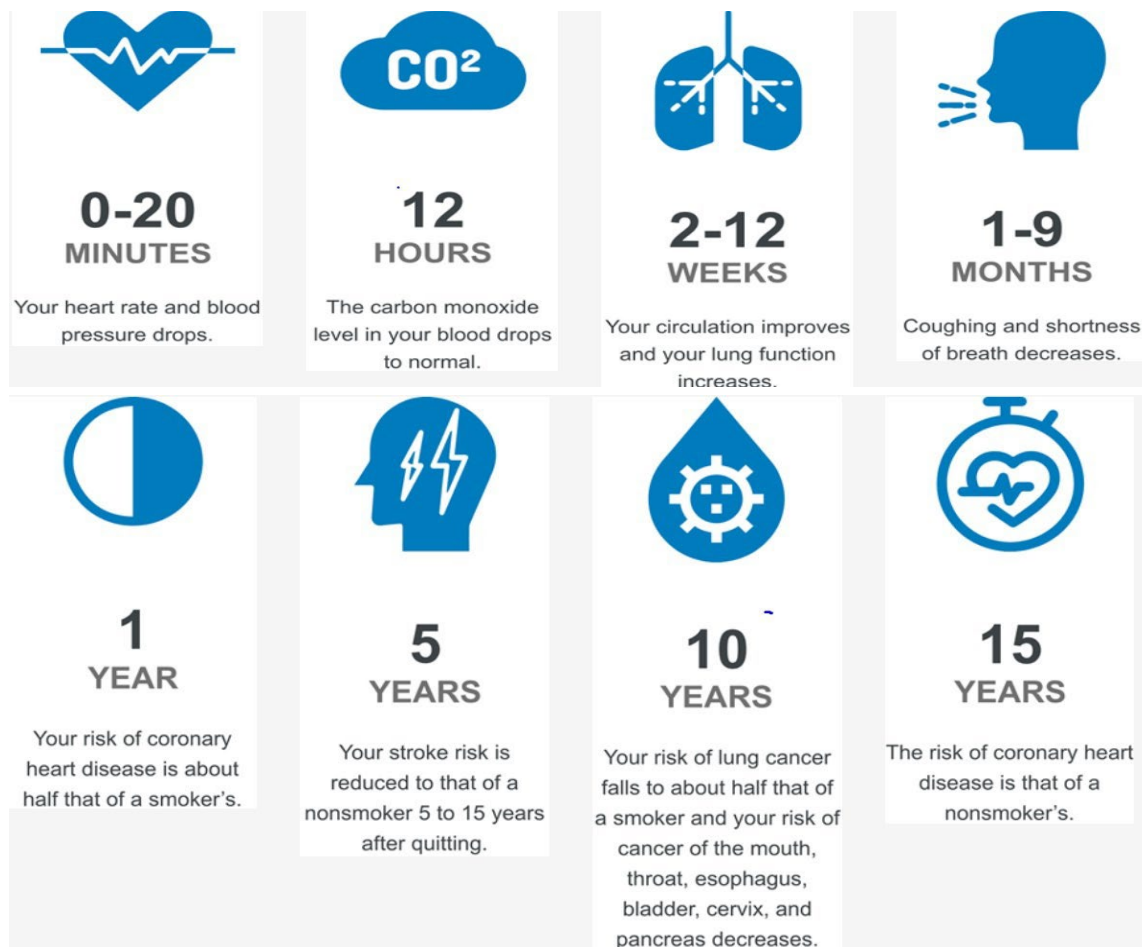
Smoking has a huge impact on non-smokers, unborn babies and children of smokers. Children exposed to second-hand smoke are at risk of developing respiratory diseases (e.g. Asthma) and ear infections.

Among smokers who are aware of the dangers of tobacco, most want to quit. Successful quitting is possible with the use of counselling and medication.

Quitting smoking decreases the excess risk of the above-mentioned diseases related to second-hand smoke in children.

Are there any benefits to quitting smoking?

Quitting smoking reduces the risk of impotence, infertility, miscarriages, premature births as well as babies born with low birth weights. Additional health benefits are evident within 20 minutes of quitting.



Did you know?

- With professional support and cessation services, tobacco users double their chances of quitting successfully.
- Switching from conventional tobacco products to e-cigarettes is **NOT** quitting.
- There are numerous strategies to stop smoking with varying success rates. Different strategies suite different people, but the success for any individual will depend on the strength of his or her motivation to stop and readiness to make the necessary changes.

Here are some tips to help you quit:

- **Make a firm decision to quit and set a date.**
- **List the reasons** why you smoke and why you want to quit.
- **Decide on a strategy:** decide whether you will stop gradually or suddenly.
- **Ask for support** - you are much more likely to give up smoking successfully with support. If you live with a person who smokes encourage him or her to quit with you – it is much easier to do it with someone else.
- **Talk to an ex-smoker.** If they can do it, so can you.
- **Throw away all reminders of smoking** – cigarette packets, ashtrays, lighters etc.
- **Plan:** identify what triggers your cravings to smoke and plan how to deal with it.
- **Occupy your mouth:** Stock up on oral substitutes e.g. sugar-free gum, nuts, fruit, carrot sticks, a water bottle.
- **Occupy your hands:** Hold a pen, pencil, and rubber band or a stress ball. Doodle, sketch or draw. Buy an adult colouring book.
- **Occupy your mind:** Remind yourself why you decided to quit smoking. Think about how proud you will feel to get through the day without a cigarette.
- **Keep active:** Smokers who exercise are twice as successful in their attempts to quit smoking. Physical activity speeds up your metabolism, preventing weight gain and occupies your mind and body to help handle cravings.
- **Avoid situations where you will be tempted** to smoke again, at least for the first few weeks. Ask smokers not to smoke in front of you.
- **Avoid alcohol:** Alcohol is often strongly associated with smoking.
- **Treat yourself:** Use the money that you are saving by not smoking to buy yourself something special.
- **Get advice:** Speak to a nurse, doctor, or counsellor who has experience helping people quit smoking. They can give you advice about how to deal with problems.
- **Consider using Nicotine Replacement Therapy** or other smoking cessation aids. Be aware that e- cigarettes are **not** proven cessation aids.
- **Keep trying!** Most people attempt to quit 8-10 times before they are successful! With each time, you will learn something valuable, which can help for the next time.
- **Get support:**
 - Health professionals at City clinics are able to assist anyone wanting to quit.
 - The Cancer Association of South Africa has an online smoking cessation programme with tried and tested tools to help you quit for good. Visit www.ekickbutt.co.za for information.
 - The World Health Organisation (WHO) has a [quitting toolkit](#) that includes mobile applications, text message support, toll-free quit lines and their virtual quit smoking program.
 - For more information on tobacco harm and the benefits of quitting, go to <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/tobacco-health-benefits-of-smoking-cessation>.