

Smoking Cessation

Smoking-related deaths represent 87 percent of lung cancer mortalities and half of lifetime smokers will die from some tobacco-related disease. Lung cancer risk increases with each cigarette smoked, and tobacco use also raises risks for a number of other health conditions, including other cancers, heart disease, and stroke. Research has consistently proven that smoking cessation is paramount to lung health, and smokers who quit are more likely to live healthier and longer lives, while greatly decreasing their lung cancer risk.

Statistics

- One in two lifetime smokers will die from some type of tobacco-related disease.
- Nearly one in five deaths in the United States is linked to tobacco use.
- Smoking is attributed to 30 percent of all cancer deaths.
- Quitting smoking before age 50 reduces risk of a premature death by half.
- Smoking increases risk of 15 other cancers including oral, pancreatic, bladder, cervical, and esophageal cancers.
- Smoking cessation decreases the risk for heart disease and stroke.
- Smokers reduce their lifespan by an average of 14 years by smoking.
- An estimated 3.3 million Texans, or approximately 19 percent of the population, still smoke cigarettes regularly.

Types of Cessation Tools

- **Nicotine Patches:** Nicotine patches provide a limited amount of nicotine through the skin. Through this step-by-step process, smokers are weaned off their addiction to nicotine by moving to patches with reduced doses over several weeks.
- **Nicotine Gum:** Nicotine gum provides limited doses of nicotine through the mouth. Users start with larger nicotine doses, slowly decreasing in dosage amounts to eventually wean themselves off nicotine altogether.
- **Nicotine Inhalers:** Available exclusively by prescription, nicotine inhalers emit a nicotine vapor to the mouth. Some smokers find this method the easiest solution, as inhalers in some ways simulate smoking.
- **Cold Turkey:** Most smokers choose to quit cold turkey, or unaided by smoking cessation medicines. Some smokers may quit altogether, while others choose to quit gradually, slowly decreasing the number of cigarettes smoked each day until they are no longer dependent on nicotine.

Tips for Cessation

- **Choose a Day:** Set aside a day to stop smoking. Some people use children's birthdays, anniversaries, or other occasions to easily remember their motivations for quitting.
- **Make a List:** Make a list of all the reasons to quit smoking and make it visible every day as a constant reminder.
- **Trash the Stash:** Eliminate all cigarettes, ashtrays, and lighters.
- **Resist Temptation:** Steer clear of popular smoking areas and avoid cigarette smoke when possible.
- **Adopt a Hobby:** Gardening, yard work, and other hobbies can keep your hands busy to help you resist the urge to smoke.
- **Keep Your Mouth Busy:** Drink water, chew gum, or snack on fruit or vegetable slices to refrain from giving into cravings.
- **Ask for Help:** Call the Texas Smoking Cessation Hotline at 1-877-937-7848. This hotline is a joint effort between the Texas Department of State Health Services and American Cancer Society.

Sources: American Cancer Society, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, Texas Cancer Registry, and Texas Department of State Health Services



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Updated 02/04/10