

tobacco: straight talk for teens



Most teens don't smoke

Did you know that about 80% of teens in the United States don't smoke? They've made a healthy choice.

Think about this.

- One third of all new smokers will eventually die younger than normal of smoking-related diseases.
- And nearly 90% of all smokers started when they were teens.

This is what smoking does to your body

- Carbon monoxide in tobacco smoke takes oxygen from your body while many cancer-causing chemicals go in.
- Your teeth and nails turn yellow and disgusting and your breath stinks.
- You cannot taste or smell things very well.
- Nicotine, the main drug in tobacco, causes your heart to beat faster and work less effectively. Nicotine is highly addictive.

Athletes who smoke can never reach the peak of their natural ability or do as well as nonsmoking athletes because their bodies get less oxygen. This is why coaches tell athletes never to smoke.

Think about this before you start smoking or as a reason to quit

Tobacco can kill

Each time you take a puff on a cigarette, you inhale 400 toxic chemicals like

- Nicotine (A drop of pure nicotine can kill.)
- Cyanide (a deadly poison)
- Benzene (used in making paints, dyes, and plastics)
- Formaldehyde (used to preserve dead bodies)
- Acetylene (fuel used in torches)
- Ammonia (used in fertilizers)
- Carbon monoxide (a poisonous gas)

Smoking causes diseases

It's a proven fact that the earlier people start smoking, the greater their risk of

- Cancer—many different types
- Heart attacks or strokes
- Chronic bronchitis—a serious disease of the lung airways
- Emphysema—a crippling lung disease

Secondhand smoke can kill others

Even if you don't smoke, breathing in someone else's smoke can be deadly too. Secondhand smoke causes about 3,000 deaths

from lung cancer and tens of thousands of deaths from heart disease to nonsmoking adults in the United States each year. Secondhand smoke (also known as environmental tobacco smoke) is the smoke a smoker breathes out and that comes from the tip of burning cigarettes, pipes, and cigars.

Smoking is ugly

- Some teens have said that kissing someone who smokes is like kissing an ashtray.
- Smoking often makes other people not want to be around you.
- Smoking stinks. If you smoke you may not smell smoke on you, but other people do. Your car will stink too.
- Most teens would rather date someone who doesn't smoke.

Smoking costs a lot of money

Do the math

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| One pack of cigarettes per day | \$5 |
| Multiplied by the days in a year | x 365 |
| Yearly cost for cigarettes | \$1,825 |

That's almost \$2,000 a year that you could be saving or spending on other things like clothes, a car, or something fun!

Nicotine makes tobacco use addictive

Nicotine in tobacco causes people to become addicted much sooner than they expect after they start using. This happens to teens too. You're addicted if

- You crave your cigarettes or other tobacco.
- You feel nervous without your cigarettes.
- You try to quit using and have trouble doing it.

If you're already addicted, there's help available to you. You can successfully quit smoking with help and support. Just ask your doctor or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (800/784-8669).

1-800-QUIT NOW is a national toll-free telephone counseling resource.

Other nicotine products

- **Electronic cigarettes are still very addictive.** Recently, electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes have been marketed as a way for users to inhale nicotine without smoking.
- **Smoking cigars, bidis, clove, or menthol cigarettes is not any safer.**
- **Chewing tobacco and snuff ("dip") are just as bad for you.** If you use smokeless tobacco you are at increased risk for illnesses harming your mouth, such as cancer and gum disease. You could lose some teeth, part of your face, or your life. Also, you probably won't be able to taste or smell things very well.

Tobacco companies are targeting YOU

Tobacco companies spend billions of dollars every year promoting their products on TV, in movies and magazines, and at sporting events. Teens are the main target of many of these ads.

Most ads falsely show smokers as healthy, energetic, and athletic. They are portrayed as sexy, stylish, and successful.

The tobacco companies and advertisers don't mention how smoking wrinkles your skin and shortens your life.

The fact is that tobacco companies need to attract 3,000 new smokers every day to make up for the more than 400,000 people who die each year from tobacco-related diseases.

Think about it. Don't believe the lies promoted in those ads.

Quitting is possible

If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do for yourself, your friends, and your family. It is the best decision for your life!

Myth—Many teens think they are not at risk from smoking. They tell themselves, "I won't smoke forever," or "I can quit any time."

Fact—Most people find it is not easy to quit.

As you continue to smoke, your body will change. It will get used to the smoke. You won't cough or feel sick every time you puff on a cigarette, yet the damage to your body will continue to worsen, and you won't even notice...for a while.

Deciding to stop using tobacco is up to you. It takes real courage to quit! Once you make the commitment to stop, get support from friends and family. Ask your pediatrician or school health office for help.

If you don't succeed at quitting the first time, you are not a failure. Keep trying! Most people need more than one quit attempt to succeed. Practice makes perfect!

Remember, for help quitting ask your doctor or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (800/784-8669). 1-800-QUIT NOW is a national toll-free telephone counseling resource.

**Each time you take a puff on a cigarette,
you inhale 400 toxic chemicals.**

For more information

American Academy of Pediatrics Julius B. Richmond Center of Excellence

www.aap.org/richmondcenter

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

202/296-5469

www.tobaccofreekids.org

truth (a campaign developed by teens)

www.thetruth.com

American Cancer Society

800/ACS-2345 (800/227-2345)

www.cancer.org

American Heart Association

800/242-8721

www.americanheart.org

American Lung Association

800/586-4872

www.lungusa.org

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From your doctor

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