

The Health Benefits of Smoking Cessation



The cessation of smoking is one of the most impactful steps a person can take to improve their health. It enhances quality of life, increases life expectancy and offers benefits regardless of age or smoking history, with greater advantages for those who quit earlier.

Lung Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Quitting smoking is one of the most important actions to take to reduce the risk of respiratory disease. Quitting smoking can:

- Stop damage to the lungs. It will not reverse previous scarring, but it can stop further damage.
- Reduce the risk of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).
- Reduce the occurrence of respiratory symptoms such as cough, and wheezing.
- Reduce the occurrence of respiratory infections such as bronchitis, and pneumonia.
- May improve lung function, reduce symptoms, and improve treatment outcomes in people with asthma.

Heart Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Smoking is the leading cause of heart attacks and heart disease. Quitting smoking is one of the best ways to improve heart health. Quitting smoking can:

- Lower blood pressure and heart rate.
- Lower the risk of heart attack, heart failure, and stroke.
- Thin blood which reduces risks of blood clots.
- Lower levels of cholesterol and fats that are circulating in blood.
- Reduce the risks of coronary heart disease, with risk falling sharply 1-2 years after cessation and then declining more slowly over time.

Cancer-Related Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Quitting smoking is one of the most important actions to take to reduce the risk of developing cancer. Quitting smoking reduces the risk of 12 different cancers, including:

- Acute Myeloid Leukemia
- Bladder
- Lung
- Colon and rectum
- Cervix
- Esophagus
- Kidney
- Liver
- Mouth and Throat
- Pancreas
- Stomach
- Voice Box (Larynx)

- **Quitting smoking at any age, no matter how long or how much a person smoked will benefit them.**
- **Quitting smoking will improve heart, lung and reproductive health as well as reduce the risk of developing cancer.**
- **Other health benefits of quitting smoking include sharper hearing, better vision, and a stronger immune system.**
- **The health benefits of quitting smoking increase over time.**



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800.232.4424 (phone)
www.ctclearinghouse.org

A Library and Resource Center on Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs, Mental Health and Wellness

Reproductive Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Quitting smoking is one of the best actions a woman can take to help ensure a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby. The best time for a woman to quit smoking is before becoming pregnant, but quitting at any time during a pregnancy can benefit the health of both mother and baby.

Quitting smoking can:

- Reduce the risk for a small-for-gestational-age baby.
- Eliminate the adverse effects of smoking on fetal growth.
- Reduce the risk of preterm delivery.
- Reduce the risk of delivering a low birth weight baby.

Other Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Sharper Hearing	Better Vision	Clearer Skin
Normal Estrogen Levels	Normal White Blood Cell Count	Stronger Immune System
Proper Wound Healing	Stronger Muscles	Stronger Bones

Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking Over Time

Over time, people who quit smoking will see further improvements in their health. These positive changes start to happen right after the last cigarette is smoked and continue for years.

Length of Time After Quitting	Health Benefits
Minutes to 24 hours	Heart rate drops. Nicotine level in the blood drops to zero.
1 to 12 months	Coughing and shortness of breath decrease.
1 to 2 years	Risk of heart attack drops sharply.
3 to 6 years	Added risk of coronary heart disease drops by half.
5 to 10 years	Risk of stroke decreases. Added risk of cancer of the mouth, throat and voice box drops by half.
10 to 15 years	Added risk of lung cancer drops by half. Risks of bladder, esophagus, and kidney cancers decrease. Risk of coronary heart disease drops close to that of someone who does not smoke.
20 years	Risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, voice box, and pancreas drops to close to that of someone who does not smoke. Added risk of cervical cancer drops by about half.

Connecticut Resources

CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

www.ct.gov/DMHAS

Commit To Quit

www.committquitct.com

CT Quitline

Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW

National Resources

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

www.samhsa.gov

American Lung Association

www.lung.org

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

www.smokefree.gov