



Tobacco and Cancer Fact Sheet

for Patients and Caregivers



Tobacco use is the most preventable cause of cancer occurrence and death in the US. Cigarette smoking increases the risk of at least 12 cancers and causes more than 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 a tobacco product, the more risk they have of being harmed.

Cancer Risk

People who smoke cigarettes, cigars, and pipes have a higher risk of certain cancers. Using smokeless tobacco, (such as chew, spit, or dip), can also cause certain cancers. Some cancers caused by using tobacco include:

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

Breathing in smoke from someone else's cigarette and the smoke they breathe out (secondhand smoke) can also increase the risk for lung cancer, as well as lung and heart diseases.

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 people avoid exposure, too. Most secondhand smoke exposure for children and adults occurs in the home.

People who quit at any age are more likely to live longer than people who keep using tobacco. The sooner a person quits, the more they can help lower their risk of getting certain cancers and keep other people safe, too.

Quitting Tobacco

Quitting tobacco is hard. There are different ways to quit, and using more than just one of these ways usually works best. Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), medicines, and counseling have all helped people quit and stay tobacco free. If you smoke, talk to your doctor about the 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.

Visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org/quittobacco or call us at **1-800-227-2345** to learn more. We're here when you need us.

