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Tobacco

"The best thing to do is give them to your enemy."
Fidel Castro, President of Cuba, who gave up smoking cigars in 1986

Globally, the leading causes of death from smoking are: cardiovascular diseases with 1.69 million deaths, cancer with 1.4 million deaths, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) with 0.97 million deaths.

Tobacco is packed with harmful, addictive substances. Scientific evidence has shown conclusively that all forms of tobacco cause cancers (and other diseases). For example, chewing tobacco causes cancer of the lip, tongue and mouth.

Smokers have markedly increased risks of many different cancers. Best known is lung cancer, where tobacco causes 80 percent of lung cancer in men and half of lung cancer in women worldwide. Lung cancer is therefore an almost totally avoidable disease.

In the future, as research proceeds, tobacco may be linked with other cancers.

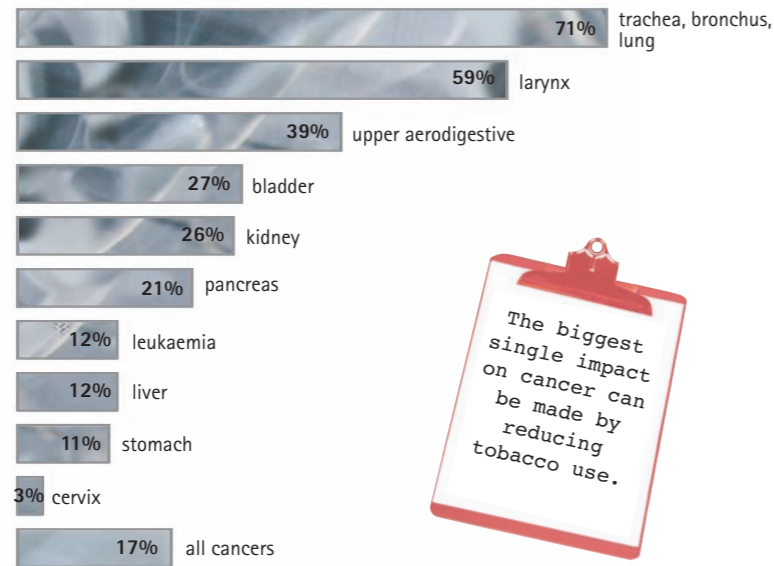
Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke causes lung and possibly other cancers, as well as other illnesses in non-smoking adults and children.

Lung and other cancers caused by tobacco are often untreatable at the time of diagnosis. The key to reducing these cancers is to prevent initiation of smoking in young people, and to encourage smokers to quit. Quitting smoking substantially reduces cancer risk.

About 1 in 5 cancer deaths worldwide is caused by tobacco.

Cancer deaths caused by smoking

Percentage by site of cancer 2005 or most recent estimate



The biggest single impact on cancer can be made by reducing tobacco use.

Cancer and tobacco

Cancers caused by tobacco compared with all new cases 2002 millions

Total new cases

