

# QUITTING SMOKING

"[Ten years ago] all we had to offer was going cold turkey or nicotine gum. . . . The good news for smokers is that people now have a choice. There's never been a better time to quit."

—MICHAEL C. FIORE, CHAIRPERSON, SUBCOMMITTEE ON CESSATION,  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON SMOKING AND HEALTH

Smoking's harm is immediately reduced and can be virtually eliminated over time after quitting, even for lifelong smokers. It is never too late to quit! Advanced tobacco control policies can help increase quit rates, a prerequisite for achieving significant reductions in smoking-related deaths during the first half of the 21st century.

Many people kick the habit easily while others struggle through a difficult cycle of addiction. Quitting is possible and is increasingly becoming the norm. Many countries now have more ex-smokers than current smokers.

Most ex-smokers quit successfully on their own ("cold turkey"), but an increasing number of programs and aids are available to help liberate smokers from their addiction. Nicotine replacement therapies (gum, patch, and inhaler) and pharmacologic agents, such as bupropion and varenicline, are available in many countries.

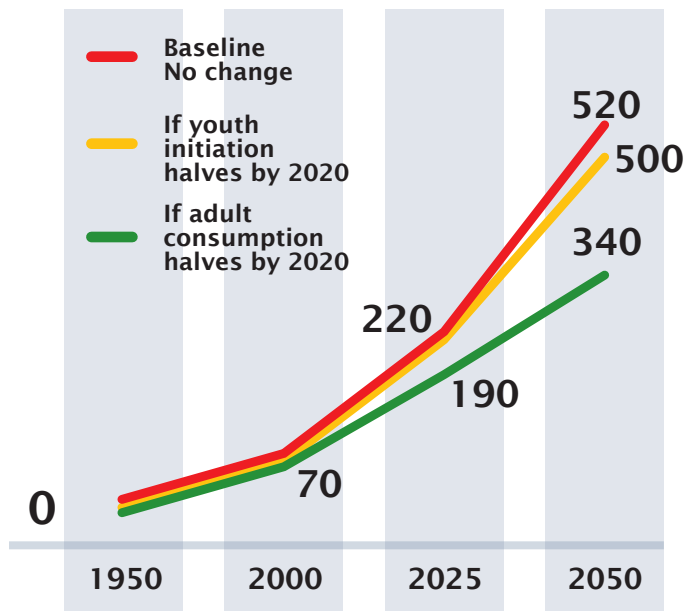
Communication technologies—such as telephone quitlines, text messaging, interactive telephony, and online counseling—offer important support. Psychological and behavioral therapies, including behavior modification, hypnosis, meditation, and acupuncture, also have been employed.

Cessation programs change individual lives, reshape social norms and community values, and foster a world where children are less likely to casually experiment with cigarettes and where adults gain confidence in their ability to quit.

Within hours of quitting, some of the damage done by smoking begins to reverse. By one year, the risk of coronary heart disease is decreased to half that of a smoker. After five to fifteen years, the risk of a stroke is reduced virtually to that of people who have never smoked. Cancer risk also reduces significantly over the decade after quitting.

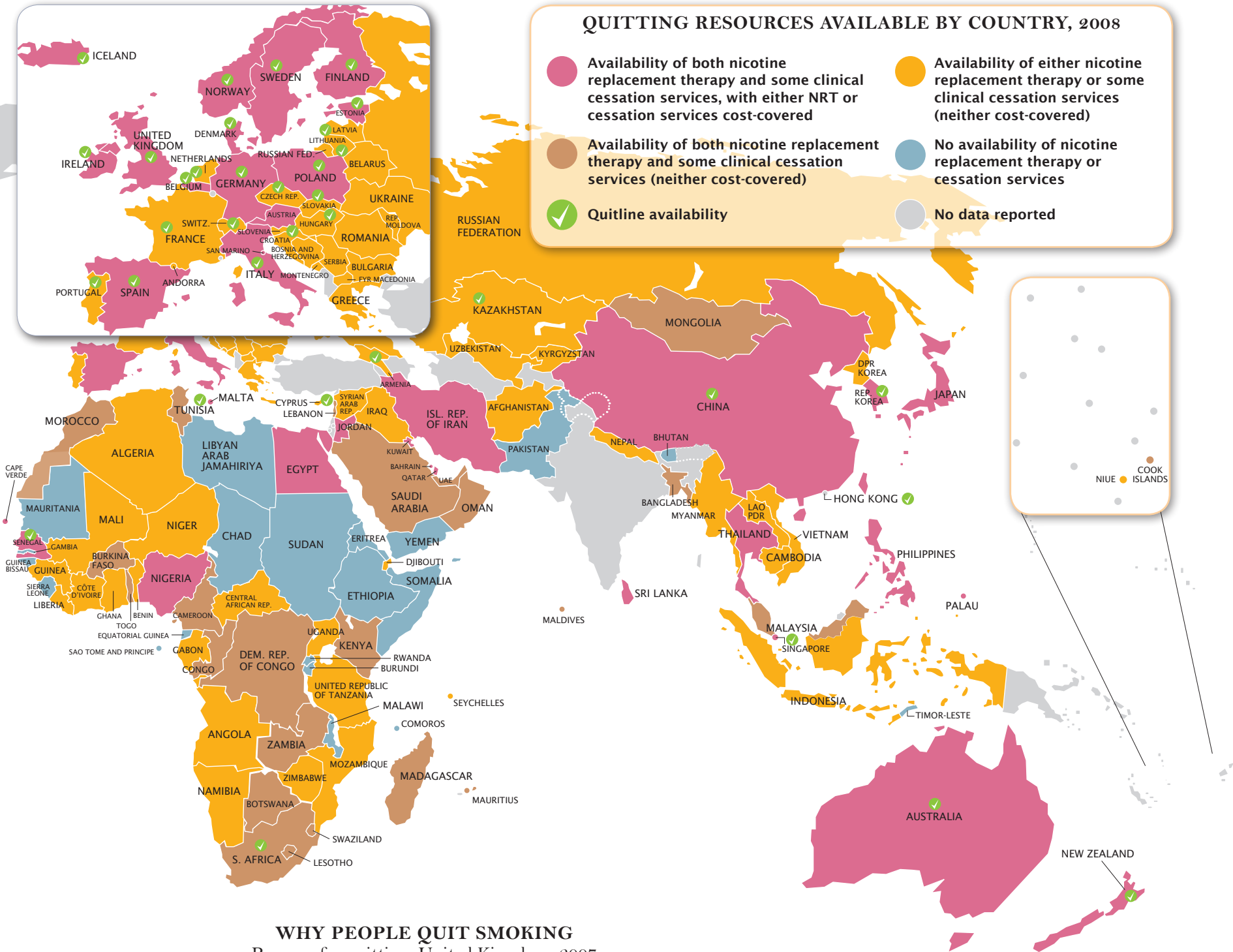


**TOBACCO DEATHS (in millions)**  
Unless current smokers quit, smoking deaths will rise dramatically over the next 50 years



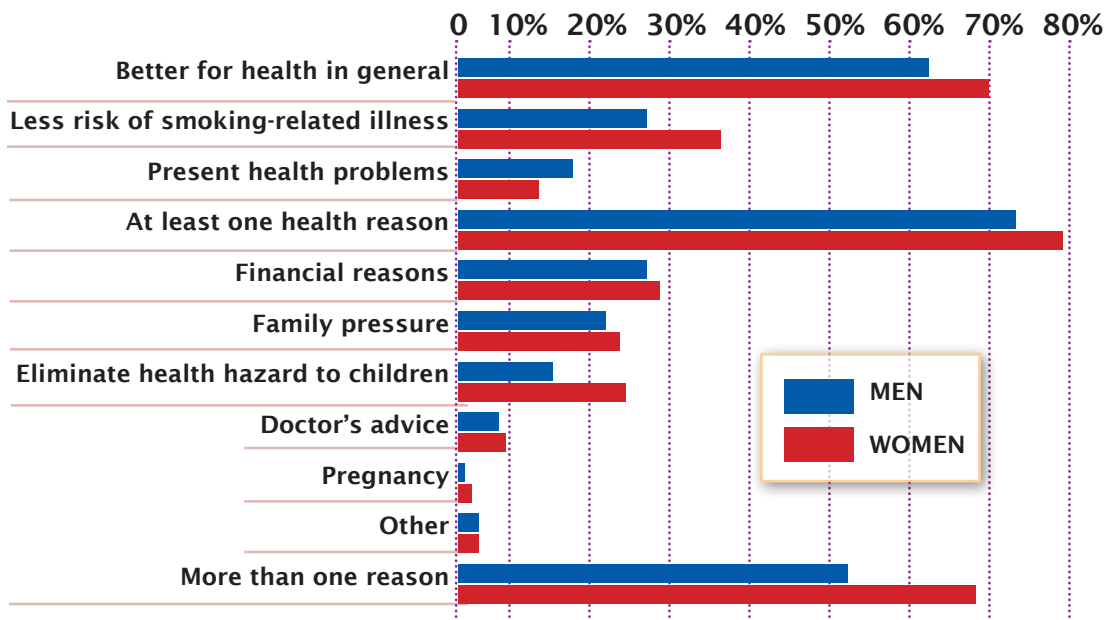
## QUITTING RESOURCES AVAILABLE BY COUNTRY, 2008

- Availability of both nicotine replacement therapy and some clinical cessation services, with either NRT or cessation services cost-covered
- Availability of either nicotine replacement therapy or some clinical cessation services (neither cost-covered)
- Availability of both nicotine replacement therapy and some clinical cessation services (neither cost-covered)
- No availability of nicotine replacement therapy or cessation services
- ✔ Quitline availability
- No data reported



## WHY PEOPLE QUIT SMOKING

Reasons for quitting, United Kingdom, 2007



**CHINA:** Quit rates increased from 9 percent in 1996 to 12 percent in 2002, an increase of 10 million ex-smokers.

**JAPAN:** Male smoking rates declined from 80 percent in 1960 to 40 percent in 2005, due mostly to smokers quitting.