

FACTS:



Health Promotion Unit
Tobacco Use Prevention Program
1-866-726-9926 (toll free)

Health risks of smoking

—from A to V—

-A-

Alzheimer's Disease. Cigarette smoking may accelerate cognitive decline in older adults. Smokers had decline four times that of nonsmokers. Higher cigarette pack-year exposure correlated with a significantly higher rate of decline.¹

Arthritis. Smoking is a risk factor for developing rheumatoid arthritis.²

Asthma. Infants exposed to cigarette smoke are more likely to develop asthma. Cigarette smoke is the single biggest indoor air pollutant, making up almost all of the measured particulate matter in indoor air.³

Atherosclerosis. Current and ex-smokers face more than three times the risk for atherosclerosis in the presence of chronic infections. Persons exposed to secondhand smoke were found to be vulnerable to chronic infection and hence, increased risk for atherosclerosis risk.⁴

-B-

Bladder. Smoking increases the chance of developing bladder cancer.⁵

Birth defects. Smoking impairs sperm motility and normal development, increasing chances of infertility, miscarriage and birth defects.⁵

Breast cancer. Women who are exposed to tobacco smoke (smoking and secondhand smoke) every day are two to three times more likely to develop breast cancer.⁶

Buerger's Disease. Smoking causes blood vessels to be inflamed and blood clots to form. An irreversible narrowing of blood vessels can lead to Buerger's Disease, a condition in which blood flow is eventually cut off from extremities, much like gangrene, and leads to amputation of toes and fingers. Smoking is the only known cause for this disease. The only known way to prevent the progression of the disease is to abstain from all tobacco products.⁷

-C-

Cancer, Cardiovascular, Respiratory. In 2000, smoking was responsible for 9,941 deaths from cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases in Missouri.^{5,8}

Carcinogens. More than 4,000 chemicals, including 43 known carcinogens are over 400 other toxins, can be found in cigarette smoke.⁹

Cataracts. Smoking increases the chance of developing cataracts and other eye diseases.⁵

Cavities. Secondhand smoke doubles the risk for dental cavities among children. There is an association between environmental tobacco smoke and risk of caries among children. Reduction of passive smoking is important not only for the prevention of many medical problems, but also for the promotion of children's dental health.¹⁰

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Cervical cancer. Women who quit smoking may dramatically reduce their risk of cervical cancer.¹¹

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease [bronchitis and emphysema]. Long-term smoking is responsible for 80-90 percent of COPD cases. A smoker is 10 times more likely than a nonsmoker to die of COPD.¹²

Colorectal cancer. Smoking increases the chance of developing colorectal cancer in both men and women.^{2,7} Long-term smoking is associated with increased risk of colorectal cancer mortality in both men and women.¹³

-D-

Diabetes. People who smoke more than a pack of cigarettes per day are nearly twice as likely as nonsmokers to develop diabetes.¹⁴

Digestive system. Smoking increases the risk of duodenal ulcers, Crohn's Disease, and colon polyps.^{5,13}

-H-

Hearing. Smokers have a 70 percent greater risk of suffering from hearing loss than nonsmokers.¹⁵

Heart disease. Cigarette smoking is a major cause of heart disease among both men and women. Smokers have twice the risk of heart attack of nonsmokers.¹⁶ A recent study found that current smokers sustained their first acute myocardial infarction (heart attack) more than 10 years earlier than nonsmokers, and the younger smokers had a higher mortality rate.¹⁷

-I-

Impotence. Smoking increases the chance of impotence in males.⁵

-K-

Kidney. Smoking increases the chance of developing kidney cancer.⁵

-L-

Leukemia. Smokers have a 50 percent greater chance of contracting a deadly form of adult leukemia.⁵

Lung cancer. Almost all (87%) of lung cancer is caused by smoking. Lung cancer has now surpassed heart disease as the leading cause of smoke-related deaths among white middle-class smokers.¹⁸

Lupus. Development of lupus is 50 percent more likely among smokers than nonsmokers.¹⁹

Lymphoma. Women who smoked 16-33 pack-years were found to be at 50 percent increased risk for Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. The risk was 80 percent for women who smoked 34+ pack-years.²⁰

-M-

Meningitis. Children exposed to tobacco smoke are more than 2^{1/2} times more likely to develop bacterial meningitis.²¹

And, children diagnosed with purulent meningitis were three times more likely to have been exposed to secondhand smoke in the home.²²

Multiple Sclerosis. Women who smoke are 1.6 times more likely to contract this disease than women who don't smoke. For men, the risk is more than 2^{3/4} higher.²³

-O-

Osteoporosis. A bone mineral loss of 2.3-3.3 percent was found for every pack-year of tobacco use.²⁴

-P-

Pancreas. Smoking doubles the risk of pancreatic cancer.^{5,25}

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Prostate Cancer. Cigarette smoking may influence the risk of extraprostatic prostate cancer in young men. Current smokers were found to be 3.85 times more likely and former smokers were 3.2 times more likely to have an extraprostatic and Gleason sum seven or greater compared to men who never smoked.²⁶

A dose-response relationship exists between number of pack-years smoked and prostate cancer risk. Men who smoked were 1.6 times more likely to develop prostate cancer, with a stronger association observed in men with the more aggressive cancer. Smoking cessation resulted in a decline in risk.²⁷

-S-

Skin. Smokers who develop skin cancer are more likely to die of their disease than nonsmokers.⁵

Stomach Cancer. Men who smoke are 2.3 times more likely and women who smoke are 1.5 times more likely to develop stomach cancer. This likelihood increases with smoking duration.²⁸

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Babies of parents who smoke are more likely to die of SIDS. Nicotine not only disrupts a baby's breathing, but also disrupts the early development of neural circuits that guard against the stopping of breathing during sleep.²⁹

Stroke. Women who smoke less than 15 cigarettes per day are 1.9 times more likely to experience a stroke than women who don't smoke. For women who smoke more than 15 cigarettes per day, the likelihood increases to 3.3 times.³⁰

-V-

Vision. People who smoke one pack or more of cigarettes per day are more likely to suffer vision loss (macular degeneration) than those who never smoked.^{5,31}

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