Tobacco Fact Sheet

Common name for tobacco include: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chew, dip, smoke, butt, snuff, bone, coffin nail, and cancer stick.

Facts

- Cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of disease and death in the U.S.
- One third of all new smokers will eventually die from tobacco use.
- A pack-a-day habit costs about $1000 per year.
- Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, lung disease and strokes.
- 43% of people who smoke as few as three cigarettes have become addicted.

What problems does tobacco cause?

More people die from tobacco-related illnesses than from AIDS, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders and suicides combined.

In the short-term, tobacco use results in increased blood pressure and heart rate, increased blood flow from the heart and narrowed arteries. Tobacco also gives you bad breath, yellow teeth, and smelly clothes. In the long-term, tobacco is the cause of many chronic diseases, including cancer, heart disease, stroke and chronic obstructive lung disease. These tobacco-related diseases often cause premature death. On average, someone who smokes a pack or more of cigarettes each day lives 7 years less than someone who never smoked.

More than 440,000 people die from tobacco-related illnesses each year.

Youth Smoking

- 80% of smokers started before they were 18 years old.
- 9 out of 10 adults began smoking during their teenage years…if you don’t start as a teen, chances are you’ll never smoke.
- 1 in 5 youth aged 12-17 are smokers.
- Most adolescents think they can quit, but after 6 years 75% still smoke.
- Girls can become addicted in 21 days compared to 6 months for boys.

Why do people smoke?

If it’s so bad for you, why do people smoke? Tobacco results in an addiction to the drug known as nicotine, due to a combination of biological, psychological and socio-cultural factors. All tobacco products contain the nicotine, a drug that is as addictive as cocaine and heroin. Nicotine causes feelings of reward and arousal, one of the reasons why smoking is often used as a coping mechanism for handling negative emotions such as stress, anger, pain or depression. Tobacco products are often used out of habit, or as a...
way of identifying with social groups. Tobacco is most commonly smoked, but can also be “dipped” or “chewed” allowing the nicotine to be absorbed more quickly via the gums.

**Smoking affecting lifestyles**

*Smoking vs Drugs:* Youth smokers are 8 times as likely to use illicit drugs and 11 times as likely to drink heavily as non-smoking youth.²

*Smoking vs School:* The majority of people start using tobacco before they finish high school. Therefore, if youth stay smoke-free in school, they will probably never smoke.¹

*Smoking vs Grades:* Kids who start smoking are more likely to get lower grades in school. They tend to hang out with other kids who smoke, have a lower self-image and don’t know how to say no to tobacco.¹

*Second-Hand Smoke:* Smokers are not only hurting themselves, they are hurting people around them. Second-hand smoke kills about 53,000 people every year.¹

**Effects of Physical Activity on Smoking**

- √ Students who participate in at least one high school sport are 40% less likely to become regular smokers and 50% less likely to become heavy smokers than those who do not participate in sport ²
- √ Smokers who exercise vigorously and regularly are more likely to cut down or stop smoking
- x Its hard to do well at sports and other physical activities if you are short of breath from smoking

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Things You Should Know About Tobacco

Nicotine and other chemicals

All tobacco products – cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco – contain nicotine. Nicotine is a drug that is as addictive as cocaine and heroin. It is also a poison. One drop of pure nicotine will kill the average-sized person.

Cigarette smoke has more than 4,000 chemicals in it. Forty of the chemicals in cigarettes can cause cancer. One ingredient found in cigarettes is carbon monoxide (as in car exhaust). Other chemicals in cigarettes include ammonia (used to clean toilets) and arsenic (rat poison). Cigarette butts are the number one source of pollution on beaches.

Deaths and illnesses

More people die from tobacco-related illness than from AIDS, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders and suicides combined. Studies show that smokers lose 7 minutes of their lives every time they smoke a cigarette. Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, lung disease and strokes. Smokers as young as 18 have shown signs of heart disease. Smoking causes 87% of all lung cancers. One third of all new smokers will eventually die from tobacco use.

Tobacco Companies

Tobacco companies spend $16 million every day to advertise cigarettes. Tobacco ads are often aimed at new, young smokers. Tobacco companies try to make smoking look cool by using good-looking models. Tobacco gives you bad breath, yellow teeth, and clothes that smell like an ashtray. They don’t advertise that!

Teens

80% of smokers started before they were 18 years old. 43% of people who smoke as few as three cigarettes become addicted. If you don’t start as a teen, chances are you’ll never smoke. 70% of teens don’t smoke. Teens who smoke cough and wheeze three times more than non-smoking teens. It’s hard to do will at sports and other physical activities if you are short of breath from smoking.

Second-hand smoke

Smokers not only hurt themselves – they hurt people around them. Secondhand smoke kills about 53,000 people every year. Smoking during pregnancy increases the risk of having a miscarriage. Babies whose parents smoke are seven times more likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Children of parents who smoke have more colds, flu, ear infections and asthma.
“Other” forms of tobacco

Cigars and chewing tobacco contain cancer-causing chemicals, just like cigarettes. Because of their size, smoking one cigar is like smoking about 10 cigarettes. Cigar smokers are 4 to 10 times more likely to suffer from cancer of the throat, larynx and esophagus than nonsmokers. Smokeless tobacco makes you spit slimy brown tobacco juice. Smokeless tobacco causes cancer of the mouth, tongue and throat.

Quitting

If you do smoke, the best thing you can do is quit. About 70% of people who smoke wish they could quit. Within days of quitting, a smoker’s sense of taste and smell returns to normal. Five to ten years after quitting, a smoker’s risk of heart disease returns to that of a nonsmoker. Half of all Americans who ever smoked have now quit.

YOU DON’T NEED IT! Take care of your health and your future. You’re worth it!

For more information:

Tobacco and Disease
http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/tepp/index.htm

Quitting Tobacco
www.ashline.org

Smoking and Cardiovascular Disease
http://www.americanheart.org

Tobacco Control
http://www.lungusa.org/tobacco/

Chronic Disease Prevention
http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp