



### I only smoke socially; am I still at risk?

There is no safe level of smoking. Even smoking just one cigarette a day increases your risk of dying from cancer or other diseases. Quitting will improve your health, quality of life, save you money, and increase your chance of making the most of life.

### I know someone who smoked their whole life and never got cancer

The fact is, 2 in 3 people who smoke tobacco will die from smoking. These are terrible odds. And it's not just cancer: there are many other diseases caused by smoking that can also severely affect your life, and the life of your family and friends. Quitting smoking will give you the best chance of living healthier for longer.

### It's too late for me; the damage is done

It is never too late to quit smoking. Quitting will reduce your risk of many different types of cancer. Your risk of developing cardiovascular (e.g. heart, stroke and blood vessel diseases), lung and many other diseases will also decrease.

Even if you already have a smoking-related illness, the benefits of quitting can include:

- Improved recovery after surgery
- Lower risk of infection
- Better treatment results
- Reduced risk of developing a secondary cancer (a cancer that has spread from the place where it started to another place in the body)

### I'm ready to quit

As soon as you quit smoking, your body will begin to repair itself. You will also save a lot of money and will have more time to spend with family and friends. Not everyone quits smoking the same way, and most people try multiple times before quitting for good. Help comes in many different forms so it's important to find out which quitting method works best for you:

- Make a Quit Plan based on your reasons to quit and triggers to smoke at [www.makesmokinghistory.org.au/quit-planner](http://www.makesmokinghistory.org.au/quit-planner)
- Call 13 78 48 or text 'call back' to 0482 090 634 to speak with a **Quitline** counsellor
- Talk to your **doctor, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service** or **pharmacist** about ways you can quit
- Visit [makesmokinghistory.org.au](http://makesmokinghistory.org.au) for more information

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# Tobacco and cancer.



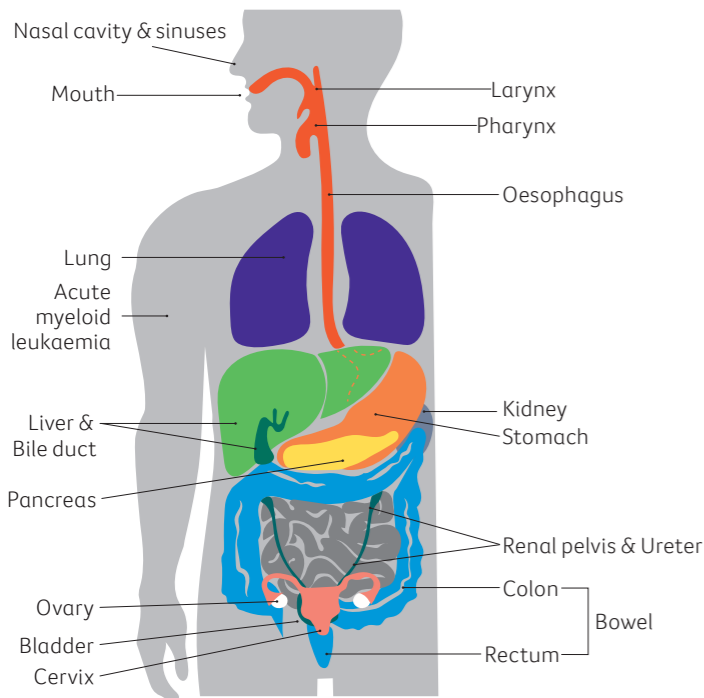
## What is in tobacco smoke?

Tobacco smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals. At least 69 of these chemicals are known to cause cancer. When you breathe in cigarette smoke, these chemicals go into your lungs and spread through your body. Tobacco companies add sugar, flavours and other additives to cigarettes. This makes the smoke easier to inhale but it's still just as harmful. As the nicotine wears off after smoking a cigarette, you may have uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms. This makes you reach for another one to relieve your cravings.

## How to decrease your risk of cancer

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do to reduce your risk of getting cancer. Tobacco smoking causes at least 16 different types of cancer and is responsible for 1 in every 5 cancer deaths.

## The 16 cancers caused by smoking



## What if I already have cancer?

It is never too late to quit smoking. If you are diagnosed with cancer, quitting smoking can:

- Reduce side effects from treatment
- Improve treatment results
- Improve recovery and survival
- Decrease the risk of developing secondary cancers

Contact our cancer nurses on 13 11 20 for information and support about any cancer-related concerns.

## More benefits of quitting smoking

Tobacco use harms nearly every organ of your body. There are many benefits from quitting, such as:

- Reducing your risk of cardiovascular disease (e.g. heart, stroke and blood vessel diseases)
- Reducing your risk of lung disease
- Reducing your risk of many other conditions that affect your quality of life and stop you from doing the things you love
- Saving yourself a huge amount of money

Planning fun things to do for yourself when you hit milestones like being smoke-free for a day, a week or a month can help you stay motivated.

## Protect your loved ones

There is no safe amount of exposure to cigarette smoke. When you quit smoking, you are helping to protect your loved ones (including children and pets) from developing diseases such as:

- Lung cancer
- Heart Disease
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Respiratory illnesses
- Middle ear infections

## Smoking and pregnancy

If you're pregnant or your partner is pregnant, quitting at any time during pregnancy reduces the risk of harm to your unborn baby. Protecting your unborn baby from cigarette smoke reduces the risk of:

- Miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- SIDS
- Premature birth

- Congenital conditions such as cleft palate
- Low birthweight and poor lung function

Quitting smoking before you get pregnant reduces the risk of pregnancy issues such as having an ectopic pregnancy. Smoking can also affect male and female fertility. So, if you're thinking of getting pregnant, now is a great time to quit.

## Smoking and alcohol

The effects of both smoking and drinking alcohol are much more harmful than the individual risks from either just smoking or just drinking alcohol. Alcohol makes it easier for the mouth and throat to absorb the cancer-causing chemicals in tobacco. People who drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes have a much higher chance of getting head and neck cancers. Alcohol is a common trigger for smoking so it can help to take a break from drinking alcohol while you're trying to quit.

## Benefits of quitting smoking

### 20 minutes after the last cigarette:

- Blood pressure, pulse rate, and body temperature of hands and feet begin to normalise



### 48 hours:

- Nerve endings start to regrow
- Sense of smell and taste begin to improve



### 1 to 3 months:

- Lung function continues to improve making it easier to remove mucus, tar and dust
- Walking becomes easier
- The body is better at fighting infections in cuts and wounds
- Circulation continues to improve
- Skin appearance begins to improve
- Tobacco stains on fingers begin to fade



### Within 1 year:

- Increased risk of coronary heart disease is halved (compared to someone who smokes)
- The body is better able to fight respiratory infections



### Within 10 years:

- Increased risk of lung cancer drops to half that of a person who smokes
- Risk of other cancers decreases, including cancers of the larynx, oral cavity, oesophagus, bladder, cervix and pancreas



### 1-4 hours:

- Resting heart rate begins to decrease
- Breath becomes fresher



### 12-24 hours:

- Almost all of the nicotine is out of the body
- Risk of heart attack begins to decrease
- Excess carbon monoxide in the blood has decreased
- Oxygen level in blood increases, helping circulation



### 9 months:

- Coughing, sinus congestion, and shortness of breath all decrease
- Cilia (small hair-like structures) regrow in the lungs, increasing the ability to 'clean lungs'
- Overall energy increases
- Stress levels are lower than when smoking



### Within 5 years:

- Stroke risk is reduced to that of someone who doesn't smoke



### 15 years +:

- Risk of heart attack and stroke is similar to that of a person who has never smoked

