

**What you know about:**

Aging Male Syndrome
Alcohol and Drug Abuse
Cancer
Diabetes
Fitness and Nutrition
Heart Disease and Stroke
Sexually Transmitted Diseases
Mental Health
Prostate Health
Sexual Health and Fertility
Smoking
Testicular Cancer
Violence Prevention

[\[Click for printable version\]](#)**Smoking in Men**[How to Quit](#)[Where to Get Help](#)[Publications and Organizations](#)

Did you know that smoking hurts your workouts because your muscles have less oxygen to use? It can also constrict your blood vessels and make it harder for you to get an erection. Did you also know that men who smoke cut their lives short by 13.2 years? Smoking harms nearly every organ in your body and can cause these health problems:

Information by Groups

For Teens and Young Adults
For Older Men
For Minority Men
For Fathers

- Lung cancer and other lung diseases, such as emphysema and chronic bronchitis
- Cancer of the throat, mouth, larynx, lungs, esophagus, pancreas, kidneys, bladder, cervix, and stomach
- Leukemia, or cancer of the blood
- Aortic aneurysms, which happens when an artery near your stomach weakens and swells
- Bronchitis and pneumonia more often than nonsmokers
- Gum disease
- Raises the risk for cataracts, which cause blindness

Other Resources

General Resources

Important Tests for a
Man's Good Health

Leading Causes of Death

Men's Health Quiz

Spanish Resources for Men

Men's Health Home

- Ulcers in smokers who have the H. Pylori bacteria
- Atherosclerosis or hardening and narrowing of the arteries
- Greatly raises the risk for heart disease and stroke
- Greatly raises the risk of dying from chronic obstructive lung disease
- Increases the body's tendency to form blood clots
- Adds to health problems from having diabetes
- Increases wound infections after surgery
- Stains your teeth, fingers, and fingernails
- Bad breath
- Wrinkling skin
- Illnesses that last longer

Cigar smoking can cause medical problems similar to those of cigarettes, like cancer of the lung, oral cavity, larynx, esophagus, or pancreas.

Smoking around others, like your wife, partner, friends, or children, can cause serious health problems for them. They have a higher chance of developing bronchitis, pneumonia, asthma, allergies, ear infections, lung cancer, and heart disease.

The good news is that you can quit smoking, no matter how old you are or how long you have smoked. Quitting smoking has immediate as well as long-term benefits. Within minutes and hours after you inhale that last cigarette, your body begins a series of positive changes that continue for years.

The Effects of Quitting

(A [text version of The Effects of Quitting](#) is available here.)

How to Quit

Research has shown that following these five key steps can help you to quit for good:

- **Get ready to quit by picking a date to stop smoking.** Before that day, get rid of all cigarettes, ashtrays, and lighters in your home, car, and workplace. And make it a rule never to let anyone smoke in your home. Write down why you want to quit and keep this list as a handy reminder.
- **Get support and encouragement from your family, friends, and**

coworkers. Studies have shown you will be more successful when you have help. Let the people important to you in your life know the date you will be quitting and ask them for their support. Ask them not to smoke around you or leave cigarettes out around you.

- **Learn new skills and do things differently.** When you get the urge to smoke, try to do something that's different—talk to a friend, go for a walk, or do something you enjoy like gardening or going to the movies. Try to reduce your stress with exercise, meditation, hot baths, or reading. It's helpful to plan ahead for how you will deal with situations or triggers that will make you want to smoke. Have sugar free gum or candy around to help handle your cravings. Drinking lots of water or other fluids also helps. You might want to change your daily routine as well—try drinking tea instead of coffee, eating your breakfast in a different place, or taking a different route to work.
- **Talk to your doctor or nurse about medicines to help you quit.** Some people have symptoms of withdrawal when they quit smoking, such as depression; not being able to sleep; feeling cranky, frustrated, nervous, or restless; and trouble thinking clearly. Even though smoking doesn't suppress appetite, you may also feel hungry. There are medicines to help relieve these symptoms. Most medicines help you quit smoking by giving you small, steady doses of nicotine, the drug in cigarettes that causes addiction. Talk to doctor or nurse about which of these medicines is right for you:
 - **nicotine patch:** worn on the skin and supplies a steady amount of nicotine to the body through the skin
 - **nicotine gum:** releases nicotine into the bloodstream through the lining in your mouth
 - **nicotine nasal spray:** inhaled through your nose and passes into your bloodstream
 - **nicotine inhaler:** inhaled through the mouth and is absorbed in the mouth and throat, but not in the lungs
 - **Bupropion SR:** an antidepressant medicine that helps relieve nicotine withdrawal and the urge to smoke
- **Be prepared for relapse.** Most people relapse, or start smoking again, within the first three months after quitting. Don't get discouraged if this happens to you or has happened to you before when you've tried to quit. Remember, many people try to quit several times before quitting for good. Think of what helped you and what didn't the last time you tried to quit—figuring these out before you try to quit again will increase your chances for success. Certain things or situations can increase your chances of smoking again, such as drinking alcohol, being around other smokers, gaining weight, stress, or becoming depressed. Talk to your

doctor or nurse for ways to cope with these situations.





Where to Get Help

Get more help if you need it. Join a quit-smoking program or support group to help you quit. Personal support is critical. These programs can help you handle withdrawal and stress and teach you skills on how to resist the urge to smoke. Contact your local hospital, health center, or health department for information about quit-smoking programs in your area. Call the National Cancer Institute at 877-44U-QUIT to talk to a counselor. Or get live, online assistance from the National Cancer Institute's LiveHelp service. LiveHelp for smoking cessation assistance is available Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 10:00 PM Eastern Time. Go to <http://www.smokefree.gov/> and click on "Instant Messaging."





Last Updated: June 2005

The following resources can help you stay on top of what you need to know about quitting smoking:

Publications

1.  [Clearing the Air: Quit Smoking Today](#) - This on-line resource is designed to help you at any stage—whether you're still thinking about quitting, have made the decision to quit, or have already taken steps to quit and just need help maintaining your new lifestyle. Both ex-smokers and experts have contributed to this guide. Clearing the Air can help people at all stages make it to their final goal—living smoke-free. Stay upbeat. Keep trying. Use what you've learned until you can quit for good.
2.  [Don't Let Another Year Go Up in Smoke: Quit Tips](#) - This publication gives tips on how to quit smoking and encourages smokers to take control with a plan of action that will ensure success. It also contains a list of resources to contact for help.
3.  [Good Information for Smokers](#) - Quitting is hard. Many people try several times before they quit for good. The information below explains how you can get help to quit smoking.
4.  [Smokefree.gov](#) - Smokefree.gov is intended to help you or someone you care about quit smoking. Different people need different resources as they try to quit. The information and professional assistance available on this web site can help to support both your immediate and long-term needs as you become, and remain, a nonsmoker. You can get immediate assistance in the form of: An online

step-by-step cessation guide, Local and state telephone quitlines, NCI's national telephone quitline, NCI's instant messaging service, and publications that may be downloaded, printed, or ordered.

5.  [Smoking and Your Digestive System](#) - This fact sheet explains the harmful effects of cigarette smoking on the digestive system and explains how the damage can be reversed.
6.  [Spit Tobacco: A Guide for Quitting](#) - This booklet is designed specifically for young men who have decided to quit using spit tobacco or who are thinking about quitting. It contains information about developing a plan for quitting, as well as information on over-the-counter and prescription medications available to help break the nicotine habit.
7.  [You Can Quit Smoking: A 5-Day Plan to Get Ready](#) - This publication lists steps to take in the five days before a quit date to prepare for the changes and challenges of life without cigarettes.
8.  [You Can Quit Smoking: Consumer Guide](#) - This popular Public Health Service brochure provides practical information and helpful tips for those who plan to quit smoking.

Organizations

1. [American Lung Association](#)
2.  [National Cancer Institute, NIH, HHS](#)
3.  [National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, NIH, HHS](#)
4.  [Office on Smoking and Health, NCCDPHP, CDC, HHS](#)

 = Indicates Federal Resources

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