

Why You Don't Want to Smoke

Tutor's Handbook



ON CALL

Lay Community Health Advisors

Why you Don't Want to Smoke!

What are the Effects of Smoking?

Tobacco use is the leading cause of disease, disability and death in the world. Each year more than 5 million people die around the world because of smoking. It is estimated that half of smokers die of a disease related to tobacco consumption and that they live on average 10-15 years less than non-smokers.

In this section we will focus on the effects of smoking on your health. Use the following points with your group to outline the reasons why you don't want to smoke if you want to have a full and healthy life:

1. Poor blood circulation:

Smokers are twice as likely to form clots, which increases the chances of sudden death. This is because smoking causes a reduction in blood circulation, this also means that your heart has to work extra hard to move blood around your body, leading to extra pressure being exerted on your heart. Prolonged smoking can significantly weaken your heart

2. Heart health suffers:

At the minute of lighting a cigarette, the heart of the smoker starts beating 30% faster. Blood pressure also increases, forcing the heart to make a greater effort

and increasing the risk of coronary heart disease.

3. Lung cancer:

Smoking causes nine out of ten cases of tumours in the lungs, as well as its effects on general lung health.

4. Lungs:

Smoking destroys the alveoli, the pulmonary unit responsible for passing oxygen to the blood, which makes breathing more difficult and increases the risk of diseases such as chronic pulmonary obstruction (COPD).

5. Stomach problems:

Nicotine consumption from smoking causes a higher risk of gastritis and gastric ulcers.

6. Cataracts:

The cataracts are the leading cause of blindness in the world. It has been seen that smokers have a 60% higher risk of having cataracts than non-smokers. It is estimated that 20% of all cataracts are related to tobacco use.

7. Fertility:

The fertility of men and women is reduced. On the other hand, the risk of male impotence is increased by the consumption of tobacco.

8. Pregnancy:

Cigarette chemicals travel unfiltered through the umbilical cord to the foetus, so the baby is more exposed to higher levels of dangerous chemicals than the mother.

9. Stress:

Another of the side effects of smoking is constant nervousness. It is a common myth

that smoking relieves stress. Rather, as smoking is a stimulant and not a relaxant it can increase your feeling of agitation

10. Acne:

Smokers are more prone to this alteration of the skin because the toxins found in cigarette reduce the blood flow in the body, which also increases the risk of skin infection and other issues with the skin.

11. Wrinkles:

Smokers' skin ages prematurely as tobacco reduces collagen and elastin levels in their skin. Your face can lose its elasticity, which leads to people looking older than they are.

12. Hair:

Smokers have fragile hair and they have a tendency to go prematurely bald and grey. Tobacco chemicals bind in the hair, which causes it to break before growing.

13. Body hair:

Female smokers tend to have more hair because tobacco consumption increases their testosterone levels.

14. Bad breath:

Smokers suffer from bad breath and, in addition, their teeth turn yellow.

15. Yellow nails:

Smokers develop nail spots and notice a yellowing around their fingers.

16. Weight gain:

Smoking promotes the increase of body mass.

What Happens When You Quit Smoking?

What will happen when you stop smoking? As soon as you stop smoking, your body will thank you deeply and will undertake a task of repairing the damage caused by tobacco use. In this way, a series of changes will begin in benefit of your health. The American Cancer Society details these changes:

- After 8 hours:
 - The oxygen levels in the blood return to their normal state,
 - The levels of nicotine and carbon monoxide in your body are reduced by half.
- After 24 hours:
 - Carbon monoxide leaves the body and the lungs begin to expel mucus.
- After 48 hours:
 - The nicotine has disappeared.
 - Your sense of taste and smell improve remarkably.
- After 72 hours:
 - Breathing becomes much easier.
 - The bronchi relax.
 - Energy levels increase.
- From 2 to 12 weeks:
 - Blood circulation improves.
- From 3 to 9 months:
 - Coughing, "wheezing" and breathing problems

improve, since lung function increases by just over 10%.

- After 12 months:
 - The risk of cardiac arrest is reduced by half with respect to the risk of the smoker.
- After 10 years:
 - The risk of lung cancer is also reduced by half, compared with the same risk suffered by a smoker.
- After 15 years:
 - The risk of cardiac arrest is reduced to that of a person who has never smoked.

How to use this Resource with your Local Health Group?

This handbook presents some information important information on why smoking is so bad for your health. While members of your group may be aware that smoking is linked to lung cancer and risk of cardiovascular disease, they may not be aware of all of the effects that smoking has on your overall health. As such, it is important that you take time in your group session to review these reasons to quit smoking, or to not start in the first place. If members of your group have teenagers or young adults in their family, it is worth advising them to share these reasons with young people in their families as a means of preventing them from starting smoking.

To accompany this handbook, you will also find a short PowerPoint presentation that

can be used with your local health network. This presentation contains an overview of the reasons why smoking is bad for you, but it also gives a timeline of how your health will improve when you quit smoking. Use this presentation with your group as a prompt to brainstorm a local campaign that can target different groups in your community and promote the benefits of quitting smoking. Questions to guide this planning session are included below.

Group Activity

Once you have shared the digital resource and the PowerPoint presentation with your group members, you can start a group discussion about the effects of smoking. Be aware that some members of your group may be smokers, may be trying to quit smoking or may have quit smoking in the past. Present the materials and then lead a thoughtful discussion, bearing in mind the experiences of those in the room. Take a toll of the group to see who is or has smoked in the past, and then lead a short discussion to identify what their relationship with smoking is and if they have quit, how has it impacted on their overall health. Using PowerPoint slides 8-11 of the accompanying presentation to brainstorm how you could make others in your community aware of the advantages of quitting smoking. Try to answer:

- Who could you target with this message?

- What techniques could you use to ensure it has an impact on their smoking habits?
- What is the tag line or slogan of your campaign?
- Based on your local community what is the best model for promoting your campaign? i.e. online through social media, in schools, through the local health centre, etc.

Once you have facilitated this planning session, you may choose to develop and implement this campaign with the support of your local group, based on what you have learned in the Lay Family Health Advisor training.

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