

Visit our website!

The UK HEEL program website is packed with useful information, including previous health bulletins. Visit us at www.ca.uky.edu/HEEL



ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

Reprinted by:
K-State Research & Extension
Atchison County Office
405 Main/PO Box 109
Effingham, KS 66023
913-833-5450

JANUARY 2010

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: TOBACCO AND CANCER

Let This Be the Year You Kick the Habit

Smoking is the cause of an estimated 87 percent of deaths from lung cancer. The use of cigars, pipes, and smokeless tobacco products are all linked to cancer as well. There are no “harmless” tobacco products. Even if you don’t inhale as you smoke, you are still putting yourself at risk for developing lung cancer because you are breathing second hand smoke. Although pipe and cigar smokers don’t inhale, they are still at risk for developing lip, mouth, and tongue cancer.

The Truth about Smoking

Most people who smoke want to quit. There is no “safe” way to smoke cigarettes. All cigarettes cause damage to the human body. In fact, cigarettes are the only legal product whose intended use, smoking, is known to cause cancer.

Don’t be fooled. Cigarette smoking is addictive! Nicotine is just as addictive as heroin or cocaine. Nicotine acts on the brain and the nervous system to create a pleasant feeling that leaves



the smoker wanting to smoke more. Make no mistake, nicotine is a drug.

Nicotine reaches the brain within a few seconds of the smoker taking a puff, but its effects wear off within a few minutes. Consequently, the smoker will feel compelled to smoke another cigarette. Because nicotine is an addicting drug, smokers will experience withdrawal symptoms,

which include irritability, nervousness, headaches, and trouble sleeping.

A typical smoker will take about 10 puffs per cigarette. If they smoke a pack a day, this will amount to about 200 puffs of nicotine each day. Some smokers have been led to believe that “light” cigarettes are not as harmful as high-tar cigarettes. This is not true. Studies have found that the risk of lung cancer was not reduced among those that smoke “light” cigarettes. In fact, low-tar cigarettes can be just as harmful as high-tar cigarettes because smokers have a tendency to take deeper puffs, puff more often, and smoke more of the cigarette.

Cigarettes and Heart Disease

Cigarette smoking is the biggest risk factor for sudden death from a heart attack.

Even when cigarette smoke is at a level too low to harm the lungs, it can harm the heart.

Continued on the back

Smoking a pack of cigarettes amounts to about 200 puffs of nicotine.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Risks

An estimated one in five deaths is caused by tobacco in the United States each year. This is unfortunate because smoking is the single most preventable cause of death in our nation.

Do You Want to Stop?

Although there is no single best way to stop smoking, some methods work better for some than for others.

Common methods to quit smoking include:

- Stopping cold turkey
- Self-help classes, some are even online
- Step-by-step manuals
- Counseling
- Telephone counseling programs
- Nicotine replacement therapy (gum, patches, inhalers, nasal sprays, or lozenges)
- Prescription drugs

It is Never Too Soon to Quit!

The following eight reasons to quit smoking are from the American Cancer Society:

- 20 minutes after quitting — your heart rate and blood pressure drops
- 12 hours after quitting — the carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal
- 2 weeks to 3 months after quitting — your circulation improves and your lung function increases
- 1 to 9 months after quitting — coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection
- 1 year after quitting — the excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's
- 5 years after quitting — your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker 5 to 15 years after quitting
- 10 years after quitting — the risk of developing lung cancer is cut in half. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, cervix, and pancreas decrease
- 15 years after quitting — the risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker

Stop smoking if you are tired of bad breath, yellow teeth, smelly clothes, coughing, and being frequently out of breath. You can think of better ways to spend your money on something other than cigarettes.



Most Important

Stop smoking for the ones you love and who love you. Make this year, your year to quit.

Resources:

American Cancer Society

- Toll-free number: 1-800-ACS-2345 (1-800-227-2345)
- Web site: www.cancer.org

American Heart Association

- Toll-free number: 1-800-AHA-USA-1 (1-800-242-8721)
- Web site: www.americanheart.org

American Lung Association

- Toll-free number: 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-548-8252)
- Web site: www.lungusa.org

Smokefree.gov

(Info on state phone-based quitting programs)

- Toll-free number: 1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669)
- Web site: www.smokefree.gov

SOURCES:

- http://www.cancer.org/docroot/SPC/content/SPC_1_When_Smokers_Quit.asp?sitearea=PED
- http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_10_2x_Questions_About_Smoking_Tobacco_and_Health.asp?sitearea=PED&viewmode=print&

ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

JANUARY 2010

Written by: Travonia Brown-Hughes, Ph.D., MCH Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Kentucky HEEL program

Edited by: Connee Wheeler

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Download past health bulletins!

www.ca.uky.edu/HEEL/Bulletins

