

GET THE FACTS

The Surgeon General's Report on the Consequences of Smoking

The 2004 Surgeon General's Report on the Health Consequences of Smoking was prepared by the country's top scientists, doctors, and public health experts. We have listed some of the more pertinent facts of this report.

Cancer

- Smoking causes cancers of the mouth, throat, larynx (voice box), esophagus, pancreas, kidney and bladder as well as stomach, cervix and acute myeloid leukemia, which is a cancer of the blood.
- Cigarette smoking causes most cases of lung cancer. Smokers are about 20 times more likely to develop lung cancer than nonsmokers. Smoking causes 90% of lung cancer deaths in men and almost 80% in women.
- Using both cigarette and alcohol causes most cases of larynx cancer.
- Certain agents in tobacco smoke can damage important genes that control the growth of cells and lead to cancer.
- Smoking low-tar cigarettes does not reduce your risk for lung cancer.

Cardiovascular Disease

- Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States.
- You are up to four times more likely to die from coronary heart disease if you smoke.
- Smoking causes atherosclerosis, or hardening and narrowing of the arteries.
- Smoking causes coronary heart disease.
- Smoking low-tar or low-nicotine cigarettes does not reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.
- Smoking causes strokes.
- Smoking causes abdominal aortic aneurysm, a dangerous weakening and ballooning of the major artery near the stomach.

Respiratory Disease

- Smoking causes injury to the airways and lungs, leading to a deadly lung condition.
- Smoking is the most common cause of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).
- Smokers are more likely than nonsmokers to have upper and lower breathing tract infections.
- Mothers who smoke during pregnancy hurt the lungs of their babies.
- Smoking during childhood and teenage years slows lung development and causes the lungs to decline at a much younger age.
- Smoking is related to chronic coughing, wheezing, and asthma among children, teens and adults.

Overall General Health

- Smokers are less healthy than nonsmokers.
- After surgery, smokers have more problems with wound healing and more respiratory complications.
- For women, smoking causes the bones to lose density after menopause – increasing the risk of hip fracture.
- Smoking causes half of all cases of adult periodontitis, a serious gum infection that can cause pain and tooth loss.
- For men, smoking may cause erectile dysfunction.
- Smoking increases your risk for cataracts, a leading cause of blindness. Smokers are two to three times more likely to develop cataracts than nonsmokers.
- Adults who smoke lose an average of 13 to 14 years of their lives.

What can I do if I am at risk for any of these health concerns?

- Talk to your doctor if you are concerned about your health.
- Quit Smoking – To date, smoking remains the largest killer of Americans- over 438,000 will die in the next 12 months. For information about breaking your addiction to tobacco, call Kentucky's Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT NOW. This is a **FREE** service. You can log on to **BecomAnEX.org** or contact the tobacco coordinator at your local health department for programs near you.

For help with
quitting

1-800-QUIT NOW

