

Surgeon General's 2004 Report

The 2004 Surgeon General's Report on the Health Consequences of Smoking was prepared by 19 of the country's top scientists, doctors, and public health experts. The full report can be viewed at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/smokingconsequences/>. Some of the more pertinent facts of that report are listed below.

CANCER

- Smoking causes cancers of the mouth, throat, larynx (voice box) lung, esophagus, pancreas, kidney, and bladder.
- Smoking causes cancers of the 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 about 90 percent of lung cancer deaths in men and almost 80 percent in women.
- Using both cigarettes 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.
- In 2000, about 1.1 million Americans had heart attacks.
- Even with treatment, 25 percent of men and 38 percent of women die within one year of a heart attack.
- Smoking causes atherosclerosis, or hardening and narrowing of the arteries.
- Smoking causes coronary heart disease.
- Smoking low-tar or low-nicotine cigarettes rather than regular 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 your stomach.

CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD)

- Smoking causes injury to the airways and lungs, leading to a deadly lung condition.
- 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.
- If you smoke during childhood and teenage years, it slows your lung growth and causes your lungs to decline at a younger age.
- Smoking is related to chronic coughing, wheezing, and asthma among children and teens.
- Smoking is related to chronic coughing and wheezing among adults.

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REPRODUCTION

- Smoking causes lower fertility in women.
- Babies of women who smoke are more likely to be born too early.
- Smoking during pregnancy causes placenta previa and placental abruption. These conditions can cause a baby to be born too early and then be sick.
- The nicotine in cigarette smoke reduces the amount of oxygen reaching the fetus.
- Smoking causes reduced fetal growth and low birth weight.
- Smoking by the mother can cause SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

OVERALL HEALTH EFFECTS

- Smokers are less healthy than nonsmokers.
- Smokers are more likely to be absent from work than nonsmokers.
- Smokers use medical care services more often than nonsmokers.
- After surgery, smokers have more problems with wound healing and more respiratory complications.
- For women, smoking causes your bones to lose density after menopause.
- Smoking increases your risk for hip fractures.
- 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 sexual problems.
- Smoking increases your risk for cataracts, a leading cause of blindness in the United States and worldwide. Smokers are two to three times more likely to develop cataracts than nonsmokers.

COSTS OF SMOKING IN DOLLARS AND LIVES

- More than 12 million deaths have been caused by smoking since the first published Surgeon General's report in 1964.
- Cigarette smoking has caused about 440,000 early deaths each year from 1995 to 1999, or more than 1,200 people every day.
- One half of all lifetime smokers will die early because of their decisions to smoke.
- The economic costs of smoking in the United States each year from 1995 to 1999 were \$157.7 billion.
- Meeting our national health goals for reducing smoking will prevent 7.1 million early deaths after 2010.
- Adults who smoke lose an average of 13 to 14 years of their lives.



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