

The Dangers of Smoking



What is smoking?

Smoking is the inhalation and exhalation of smoke from cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products. It is the leading preventable cause of death.

What are cigarettes?

A cigarette is a thin cylinder of tobacco wrapped in paper that is smoked. Cigarettes contain many ingredients that can be very harmful to your body including:

- Arsenic: This is used to preserve wood.
- Cadmium: A metal used to make batteries.
- Polonium-120: This is an element that is known to cause cancer.
- Nicotine: A chemical found in tobacco that is highly addictive. It can cause problems with brain development in adolescents.

Interesting Fact!

Currently, there are approximately 1.1 billion tobacco consumers in the world.

Why is smoking bad for you?

Smoking damages nearly every single organ in your body. It can cause cancer, strokes, heart diseases, lung diseases, and many more health complications. According to the American Lung Association, approximately 90% of males and 80% of females that died from lung cancer smoked. Furthermore, “men who smoked are 23 times more likely to develop lung cancer. Women are 13 times more likely, compared to never smokers.”



Picture of a human lung. The white section is cancer and the black is areas are from smoking

Smoking: Inhalation and exhalation of smoke from tobacco products

Reading Sample



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Secondhand Smoke: Smoke that is inhaled by a nonsmoker that is passing by or in the same area as someone smoking.

Respiratory: Areas of your body that allow you to breathe.

What makes smoking so addictive?

Many people, who would stop smoking if they could, simply can't get past the strong **addiction** it has over them. Nicotine is the extremely addictive chemical found in tobacco. When it is inhaled, it can reach the brain within ten seconds. Inside the brain, nicotine increases the level of **dopamine**, a chemical that makes you feel happy. This increase in dopamine does not last long and needs to be replenished throughout the day. This constant need to replenish dopamine level is what makes nicotine so addictive.



What are E-Cigs?

E-Cigs or Electronic Cigarettes are devices that vaporize (makes into a gas) a liquid that is inhaled. The process is sometimes called vaping. The liquid consists of nicotine that is extracted from tobacco and is mixed with other chemicals. E-Cigs claim that they have less harmful chemicals than regular cigarettes and are safer to smoke while still increasing the levels of dopamine in your brain. Even if they are safer, they are still highly addictive and nicotine has been shown to have its own range of negative effects. These effects include an increased risk of **cardiovascular**, respiratory and **intestinal** disorders, a decreased immune system (so you get sick more easily) and increased **DNA mutation** that can lead to cancer.



Addition: Something you need to do to feel good.

Dopamine: A chemical in the brain that makes you feel good.

Cardiovascular: Your heart and blood vessels.

Intestinal: Your intestines. This is where most of your digestion takes place.

Mutation: Changing the structure of your genetic information (your body's blueprint).

Reading Comprehension Questions:

1. What
2. Why is
3. Why is secondhand smoke bad for children?
4. What is the addictive chemical found in cigarettes?
5. What are E-Cigs and

Extension Questions:

6. One
7. Many cities, states, provinces and countries have created laws against smoking in public areas or near children. Using your search engine, research and describe the laws that have been created in your area.
8. Create an

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