

Learning About Benefits From Quitting Smoking

How does quitting smoking make you healthier?



If you're thinking about quitting smoking, you may have a few reasons to be smoke-free. Your health may be one of them.

- When you quit smoking, you lower your risks for cancer, lung disease, heart attack, stroke, blood vessel disease, and blindness from macular degeneration.
- When you're smoke-free, you get sick less often, and you heal faster. You are less likely to get colds, flu, bronchitis, and pneumonia.
- As a nonsmoker, you may find that your mood is better and you are less stressed.

When and how will you feel healthier?

Quitting has real health benefits that start from day 1 of being smoke-free. And the longer you stay smoke-free, the healthier you get and the better you feel.

The first hours

- After just 20 minutes, your blood pressure and heart rate go down. That means there's less stress on your heart and blood vessels.
- Within 12 hours, the level of carbon monoxide in your blood drops back to normal. That makes room for more oxygen. With more oxygen in your body, you may notice that you have more energy than when you smoked.

After 2 weeks

- Your lungs start to work better.
- Your risk of heart attack starts to drop.

After 1 month

- When your lungs are clear, you cough less and breathe deeper, so it's easier to be active.
- Your sense of taste and smell return. That means you can enjoy food more than you have since you started smoking.

Over the years

- After 1 year, your risk of heart disease is half what it would be if you kept smoking.
- After 5 years, your risk of stroke starts to shrink. Within a few years after that, it's about the same as if you'd never smoked.
- After 10 years, your risk of dying from lung cancer is cut by about half. And your risk for many other types of cancer is lower too.

How would quitting help others in your life?

When you quit smoking, you improve the health of everyone who now breathes in your smoke.

- Their heart, lung, and cancer risks drop, much like yours.
- They are sick less. For babies and small children, living smoke-free means they're less likely to have ear infections, pneumonia, and bronchitis.
- If you're a woman who is or will be pregnant someday, quitting smoking means a healthier newborn.
- Children who are close to you are less likely to become adult smokers.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patientEd>.

Enter **O319** in the search box to learn more about "**Learning About Benefits From Quitting Smoking.**"

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