

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a long-term lung disease that causes shortness of breath. Around 74 per cent of deaths from COPD are due to smoking.

COPD commonly occurs because of the destruction of lung tissue, otherwise known as emphysema. Some people with COPD have a persistent cough and produce a small amount of sputum each day. This is known as chronic bronchitis and it is also caused by smoking.

Emphysema

Smoking causes the air sacs in the lungs to progressively lose their flexibility and break down, making it harder to breathe. Emphysema cannot be reversed and is often called 'lung rot'. Research reveals that around 94 per cent of long-term smokers, who smoke more than one packet of cigarettes a day, will develop some degree of emphysema.

Bronchitis

Bronchitis occurs when the breathing tubes become narrowed and congested with excess mucus. This reduces the amount of air that you can breathe in and out. Bronchitis gives you a smoker's cough and it also lowers your resistance to other diseases, such as pneumonia. Smokers are twice as likely to have bronchitis than non-smokers.

Cancer of the colon

Around 2700 Queenslanders are diagnosed with colon cancer annually, and almost 1000 die from the disease. Recent research has shown a link between smoking and colon cancer.

Cancer of the stomach

Smoking is a known risk factor for stomach cancer. It is estimated that 12 per cent of stomach cancers in males and eight per cent in females can be attributed to smoking.

Cancer of the pancreas

Smoking is a known causal factor in the development of cancer of the pancreas. It is estimated that 23 per cent of pancreatic cancers in males and 16 per cent in females are due to smoking.

Cancer of the kidney

Research shows that smoking causes kidney cancer. The risk of developing kidney cancer increases with the number of years and number of cigarettes a person smokes.

Cancer of the cervix

Women who smoke have a greater risk of developing cancer of the cervix.

Cancer of the penis

Smoking is associated with an increased risk of penile cancer. It is estimated that 21 per cent of cancers of the penis are caused by smoking.

Cancer of the bladder

Smoking has been identified as a major risk factor for cancer of the bladder. 38 per cent of male and 28 per cent of female bladder cancers can be attributed to smoking.

Leukaemia

People who smoke have a greater risk of developing all types of leukaemia, compared to non-smokers. The risk of developing myeloid leukaemia increases with the number of cigarettes smoked.

Further information

www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy/atods/smoking

HOW TO QUIT

To improve your chance of quitting smoking for good, it is a good idea to plan ahead.

You may find these tips helpful:

- **Get support.** Quitline's trained counsellors are available seven days a week to help you through the process of quitting—call **Quitline 13 QUIT (13 7848)** for free information, practical assistance and support.
- **Talk to your health professional.** Discuss quitting smoking with a general practitioner (GP), pharmacist or community health worker, and plan your quit strategy together.
- **Consider using pharmacotherapy.** Different products are available to help you quit smoking. Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) includes patches, gum, lozenges, inhalers and mouth spray. The aim of NRT products is to replace some of the nicotine from cigarettes without the harmful chemicals found in tobacco smoke, thus reducing withdrawal symptoms, such as cravings and anxiety. *Bupropion Hcl* and *Varenicline* are non-nicotine medications that are also effective in helping smokers to quit. *Bupropion Hcl* and *Varenicline* are available only on prescription and your GP can help decide if they are suitable for you.

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Smoking— it's not just lung cancer



Reducing cancer risk

Even if you have smoked for many years, quitting smoking will greatly reduce your cancer risk compared with a continuing smoker.

When you quit smoking, the benefits start immediately—with noticeable improvements in the first 72 hours. After 10 to 15 years, your risk of death from all causes, including lung cancer, will be close to that of someone who has never smoked.

Lung cancer

Lung cancer is the most common cause of cancer death in Queensland among both men and women—89 per cent of lung cancer in men and 70 per cent in women can be linked directly to smoking. Tobacco smoking is by far the most important cause of developing lung cancer.

Since the early 1980s, there has been a decrease in the prevalence of smoking among men, resulting in a decrease in the death rate from lung cancer. In contrast, smoking rates for women continued to increase until the mid-1970s which is still resulting in increased rates of deaths from lung cancer.

The World Health Organization describes smoking as ‘the single greatest cause of preventable disease in the developed world.’



Cardiovascular disease

Smoking is a major cause of heart attack, stroke, peripheral arterial disease and abdominal aortic aneurysms, all of which are types of cardiovascular disease.

Smoking contributes to clogged arteries that can lead to heart attack, stroke and peripheral arterial disease. Smoking a cigarette also temporarily increases heart rate and blood pressure, which raises the body’s demand for oxygen, but at the same time, deprives the body of oxygen through the effects of carbon monoxide, one of the main components of cigarette smoke.

Smoking one to four cigarettes per day can double or triple the risk of cardiovascular diseases. The risk increases with the number of years of smoking and number of cigarettes smoked. There is now strong evidence that exposure to second-hand cigarette smoke is also a cause of heart disease in non-smokers.

Mouth and throat cancer

The organs associated with the respiratory system are all affected by tobacco smoke. Smoking is a major cause of cancer of the oral cavity (tongue, lips and gums), oesophagus (gullet) and larynx (voice box). Approximately 52 per cent of oral cancers in males and 42 per cent in females can be attributed to smoking. Around half of all cancers of the oesophagus and 60 per cent of all cancers of the larynx are due to smoking.

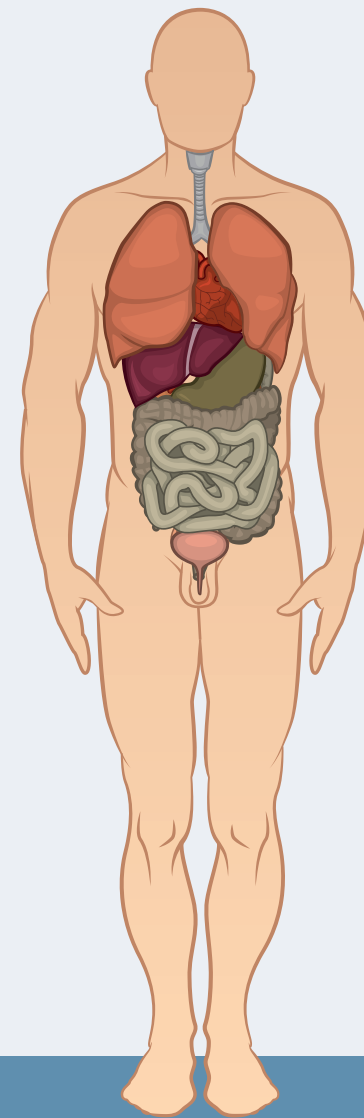
The risk of developing oral cancers is higher with increased smoking, particularly in combination with alcohol use. The risk of developing these cancers is lowered if a person quits smoking.

Tobacco smoking is a leading cause of preventable death and illness in Australia. Smoking causes approximately 15,500 deaths in Australia each year. One in two lifetime smokers will die from smoking. About half of these deaths occur in middle age.

Tobacco is highly addictive. Most adult smokers start smoking before reaching 20 years of age. Tobacco smoke contains over 7000 chemicals. As well as tar and nicotine, these harmful chemicals include carbon monoxide, ammonia and arsenic.

Just one cigarette

- Speeds up then slows down the activity of your brain and nervous system.
- Causes dizziness.
- Makes your eyes water.
- Dulls your appetite, and sense of taste and smell.
- Makes you more susceptible to coughs and colds.
- Increases your heart and pulse rate.
- Reduces the function of the little hairs (cilia), which help clean the lining of your bronchial tubes.
- Raises your blood pressure.
- Makes your muscles tense.
- Increases hand tremors.
- Makes your hair, hands, breath, clothes, car and home smell.



Over a period of time, smoking can lead to

- Premature ageing of your skin.
- Periodontal disease, yellowing teeth, tooth decay and reduced blood flow to gums.
- Macular degeneration—a common cause of blindness.
- Narrowing of blood vessels to your heart and brain.
- Shortness of breath, coughs and respiratory infections.
- Many cancers, including lung cancer.
- Chronic bronchitis.
- Emphysema.
- Greater risk of heart attack and stroke.
- Greater risk of sudden cardiac death.
- Greater risk of cancers of the mouth, voice box, windpipe, bladder, kidney, cervix and stomach.
- Increased risk of developing peptic ulcers.
- Narrowing of blood vessels to the penis, causing impotence.
- Reduced fertility.
- Poor circulation, which increases the risk of gangrene and amputation.
- Unhealthy birthweight babies, and an increased risk of stillbirths and miscarriages.
- The foetus of a pregnant women becoming an unwilling passive smoker.

What happens when you smoke?

Tobacco smoke contains more than 7000 toxic chemicals, at least 70 of which are known to cause cancer. Many of the chemicals in tobacco smoke cause serious damage to your health.

Some of these are:

- **Carbon monoxide**—a poisonous gas produced by burning tobacco that is absorbed into the bloodstream. This reduces the oxygen in your blood and forces the heart to work harder.
- **Nicotine**—the addictive drug in tobacco that increases a smoker’s blood pressure and heart rate.

- **Tars**—poisonous chemicals that penetrate deep into the lungs and get in to your blood. The tars found in tobacco smoke are known to cause cancer.

Other poisonous chemicals in tobacco smoke include turpentine, acetone, benzene and ammonia.