

Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking Over Time

It's never too late to quit using tobacco. The sooner you quit, the more you can reduce your chances of getting cancer and other diseases.

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Within minutes of smoking your last cigarette, your body begins to recover:

A few minutes after quitting		Your heart rate drops.
24 hours to a few days after quitting		Nicotine levels in your blood drop to zero. The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
1 to 12 months after quitting		Coughing and shortness of breath decrease.
1 to 2 years after quitting		Your risk of heart attack drops dramatically.
5-10 years after quitting		Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat and voice box (larynx) is cut in half. Your risk of stroke decreases.
10 years after quitting		Your risk of lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking. Your risk of cancer of the bladder, esophagus, and kidney decreases.
15 years after quitting		Your risk of coronary heart disease is close to that of a nonsmoker.
20 years after quitting		Your risk of several cancers, including those of the mouth, throat, voice box (larynx), and pancreas, drops to close to that of someone who does not smoke. Your added risk of cervical cancer drops by about half.

These are just a few of the health benefits of quitting smoking, but there are others, too.

Quitting smoking lowers your risk of other cancers over time, including cancers of the stomach, liver, cervix, colon, and rectum as well as acute myeloid leukemia (AML).

Quitting also lowers your risk of heart and lung problems such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), lung infections, and circulation around your heart and other body parts.

People who quit smoking can also add as much as 10 years to their life, compared to people who continue to smoke.

Quitting while you're younger can reduce your health risks more (for example, quitting before the age of 40 reduces the risk of dying from smoking-related disease by about 90%). But quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost by continuing to smoke.

Are there other benefits of quitting that I'll notice right away?

Kicking the tobacco habit offers other rewards that you'll notice right away and some that will show up over time.

Right away you'll save the money you would have spent on tobacco. You may also notice these benefits:

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Guide to Quitting Tobacco →

Tobacco addiction is both mental and physical. For most people, the best way to quit is some combination of medicine, a method to change personal habits, and emotional support.

Staying Tobacco-free After You Quit →

Deciding to quit tobacco is a major milestone. But *staying* quit is the final, longest, and most important part of the process.

Written by References



Developed by the [American Cancer Society medical and editorial content team](#) with medical review and contribution by the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO).

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A free, email-based smoking cessation program from the American Cancer Society.

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