

# tobacco: straight talk for teens



## Most teens don't smoke

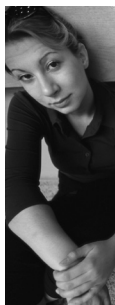
Did you know that about 80% of teens in the United States don't smoke? They've made a healthy choice.

Think about this.

- One-third of all new smokers will eventually die younger than normal, because of smoking-related diseases.
- Nearly 90% of all smokers started when they were teens.

## This is what smoking does to your body

- Carbon monoxide in tobacco smoke takes oxygen from your body while many cancer-causing chemicals go in.
- Your teeth and nails turn yellow and disgusting and your breath stinks.
- You cannot taste or smell things very well.
- Nicotine, the main drug in tobacco, causes your heart to beat faster and work less effectively. Nicotine is highly addictive.



Athletes who smoke can never reach the peak of their natural ability or do as well as nonsmoking athletes because their bodies get less oxygen. This is why coaches tell athletes never to smoke.

## Think about this before you start smoking or as a reason to quit

### Tobacco can kill

Each time you take a puff on a cigarette, you inhale 400 toxic chemicals like

- Nicotine (A drop of pure nicotine can kill.)
- Cyanide (a deadly poison)
- Benzene (used in making paints, dyes, and plastics)
- Formaldehyde (used to preserve dead bodies)
- Acetylene (fuel used in torches)
- Ammonia (used in fertilizers)
- Carbon monoxide (a poisonous gas)

### Smoking causes diseases

It's a proven fact that the earlier people start smoking, the greater their risk of

- Cancer—many different types
- Heart attacks or strokes
- Chronic bronchitis—a serious disease of the lung airways
- Emphysema—a crippling lung disease that makes it hard to breathe

## Secondhand smoke can kill others

Even if you don't smoke, breathing in someone else's smoke can be deadly too. Secondhand smoke causes about 3,000 deaths from lung cancer and tens of thousands of deaths from heart disease to nonsmoking adults in the United States each year. Secondhand smoke (also known as environmental tobacco smoke) is the smoke a smoker breathes out and that comes from the tip of burning cigarettes, pipes, and cigars.

## Thirdhand smoke is dangerous, too!

Thirdhand smoke is the smoke left behind—the harmful toxins that stay in places where people have smoked previously. Thirdhand smoke can be found in walls, on the seats of cars, and even in someone's hair.

## Smoking is ugly

- Some teens have said that kissing someone who smokes is like kissing an ashtray.
- Smoking often makes other people not want to be around you.
- Smoking stinks. If you smoke you may not smell smoke on you, but other people do. Your car will stink too.
- Most teens would rather date someone who doesn't smoke.

## Smoking costs a lot of money

### Do the math.

One pack of cigarettes per day:	\$6.25
Multiplied by the days in a year:	× 365
Yearly cost for cigarettes:	\$2,281.25

That's almost \$2,300 a year that could be saved or spent on other things like clothes or concert tickets.

## Nicotine makes tobacco use addictive

Nicotine in tobacco causes people to become addicted much sooner than they expect after they start using. This happens to teens too. You're addicted if

- You crave your cigarettes or other tobacco.
- You feel nervous without your cigarettes.
- You try to quit using and have trouble doing it.

If you're already addicted, you can successfully quit smoking with help and support. Just ask your doctor or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (800/784-8669).

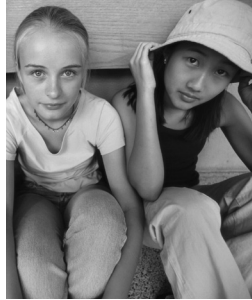
## Other tobacco products

Many people believe other forms of tobacco, such as e-cigarettes or chewing tobacco, are safer than smoking because they are not inhaling smoke. However, this is not true. These products still contain many dangerous chemicals and ingredients that can cause harm to the body.

If you use smokeless tobacco you are at increased risk for illnesses harming your mouth, such as cancer and gum disease. You could lose some teeth, part of your face, or your life. Also, you probably won't be able to taste or smell things very well.

## Tobacco companies want you to smoke

When tobacco companies were sued in the 1990s, part of the trial's verdict made the companies turn over their secret, internal documents. One thing we learned from those documents was that tobacco companies marketed cigarettes to teens to get them to start smoking. They called teen smokers "replacement smokers" because they took the place of, or replaced, older people who died from smoking. Tobacco companies manipulate their ads and product flavors to appeal to teens.



## Quitting is possible

If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do for yourself, your friends, and your family. It is the best decision for your life!

**Myth**—Many teens think they are not at risk from smoking. They tell themselves, "I won't smoke forever," or "I can quit any time."

**Fact**—Most people find it is not easy to quit.

As you continue to smoke, your body will change. It will get used to the smoke. You won't cough or feel sick every time you puff on a cigarette, yet the damage to your body will continue to worsen, and you won't even notice...for a while.

Deciding to stop using tobacco is up to you. It takes real courage to quit! Once you make the commitment to stop, get support from friends and family. Ask your pediatrician or school health office for help.

If you don't succeed at quitting the first time, you are not a failure. Keep trying! Most people need more than one quit attempt to succeed. Practice makes perfect!

Remember, for help quitting ask your doctor or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (800/784-8669). 1-800-QUIT NOW is a national toll-free telephone counseling resource.

## For more information

American Academy of Pediatrics Julius B. Richmond Center of Excellence  
[www2.aap.org/richmondcenter/ForKids\\_Teens.html](http://www2.aap.org/richmondcenter/ForKids_Teens.html)

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
202/296-5469  
[www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org)

truth (a campaign developed by teens)  
[www.thetruth.com](http://www.thetruth.com)

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## From your doctor

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