

How would quitting smoking affect the risk of developing cancer and other diseases?

Smokers who quit live longer than those who continue to smoke. In addition, the earlier smokers quit, the greater the health benefit. Quitting smoking reduces a person's risk of dying from smoking-related cancers and other diseases. The extent to which this risk is reduced depends on earlier smoking habits and the presence or absence of illness at the time of quitting.

Research has shown that people who quit before age 35 reduce their risk of developing a tobacco-related disease by 90 percent. Even smokers who quit before age 50 significantly reduce their risk of dying from a tobacco-related disease.

Tips for helping you to stop smoking:

- Set a stop date and tell family, friends and co-workers.
- Get rid of cigarettes or smokeless/chewing tobacco and ashtrays at home, work and in your car.
- Get involved with a tobacco cessation program.
- Walk, jog or bike ride.
- Do things you enjoy.
- Learn and practice relaxation techniques.
- Keep a list of what makes you "slip up" and learn from those situations.
- For help quitting smokeless/chewing tobacco, substitute with peppermints, sunflower seeds or gum.

It is never too late to quit!

Useful Contacts:

Mauritius Cancer Society

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Email: mcs@hotmail.com

Link to Life

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Email: linktolife@intnet.mu

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Smoking & Cancer



Your Guide to Cancer



Mauritius Research Council

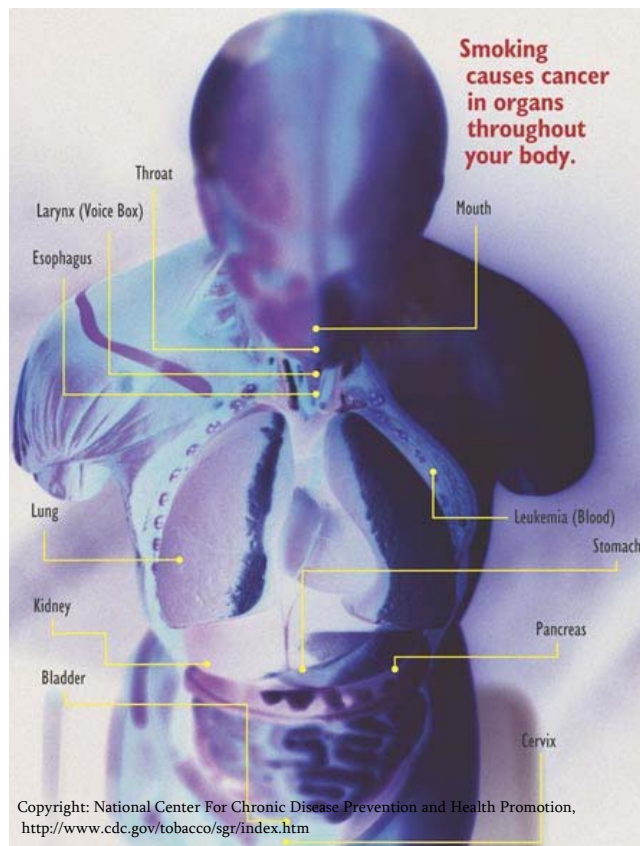


Ministry of Health & Quality of Life

What are the effects of cigarettes smoke on cancer?

Cigarette smoking causes lung cancer. It is also responsible for most cancers of the larynx, oral cavity, esophagus and bladder.

In addition, it is highly associated with the development of kidney, pancreatic, and cervical cancers.



How does smoking cause cancer?

Cigarette smoke contains around 4000 compounds, many of which are toxic and can damage the cells in our body. Some of these are also carcinogenic, that is they cause cancer. The three main ingredients of cigarette smoke are:

- Nicotine
- Carbon monoxide
- Tar (a substance made up of various chemicals, many of which are known to cause cancer)

Other harmful chemicals in cigarette smoke include:

- **Acetone**, more commonly used in nail polish remover
- **Ammonia**, used in the dry cleaning industry
- **Arsenic**, a poison used in pest control and insecticides
- **Benzene**, a cancer-causing agent used in the production of fuel and chemicals
- **Cadmium**, a very poisonous chemical that can cause liver, kidney and brain damage, used in batteries
- **Formaldehyde**, a known carcinogen used to preserve dead bodies

Are there any health risks for smokers and non-smokers?

The risk of developing smoking-related diseases, such as lung and other cancers, heart disease, stroke, and respiratory illnesses, is related to total lifetime exposure to cigarette smoke. This includes:

- the number of cigarettes a person smokes each day
- the intensity of smoking (i.e., the size and frequency of puffs)
- the age at which smoking began
- the number of years a person has smoked

The health risks caused by cigarette smoking are not limited to smokers - exposure to secondhand smoke, or environmental tobacco smoke (ETS), significantly increases a nonsmoker's risk of developing lung cancer. and is responsible for lower respiratory tract infections .

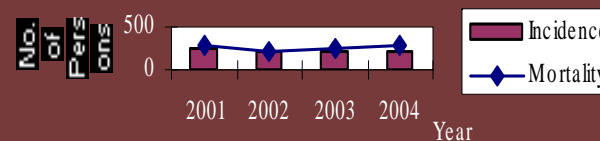
Research has shown that women who smoke during pregnancy have a higher risk of having a stillborn baby, suffering a miscarriage, or of delivering an underweight baby.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), a condition in which a healthy baby dies unexpectedly during sleep, occurs twice as often in children born to mothers who smoke during pregnancy.

Fact:

Lung cancer is the first cause of cancer mortality amongst men in Mauritius and is the third leading cause of cancer mortality amongst women.

Smoking-Related Cancer Incidence and Mortality 2001-2004



For more information, consult:

1. <http://www.cancer.org>
2. <http://quitsmoking.about.com/cs/nicotinepatch/a/cancersmoke.htm>
3. <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/aboutcancer/reducingyourrisk/smoking>
4. <http://www.who.int/tobacco/en/>
5. <http://www.stop-tabac.ch/fr/FAQ/>
6. <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgf/index.htm>