

REASONS TO GIVE UP SMOKING

Nicotine is the most addictive drug known to man, giving up is difficult. If you are hoping to or in the process of giving up cigarettes, this article should give you a little more motivation.

10 reasons to stop smoking

1. Makes hair clothes and breath stink
2. Teeth and fingers get stained brown with nicotine
3. Smoking ages the skin prematurely
4. 20 cigarettes a day costs you approximately €3000 a year
5. Smoking makes you 10 times more likely to die from a major heart attack or stroke
6. 9 out of 10 lung cancer deaths are as a result of smoking
7. Male smokers have a lower sperm count and more abnormal sperm than nonsmokers
8. Female smokers have more trouble getting pregnant than nonsmokers and also have a higher rate of miscarriages during pregnancy.
9. Smoking long term can cause a disease called "peripheral vascular disease". This condition restricts blood flow to the hands and feet and can cause gangrene and the amputation of limbs.
10. If you don't smoke you'll be fitter and have greater stamina and energy.

Risks from Smoking

Premature death

Smoking kills around 7000 people annually in Ireland. According to the British Medical Association (BMA), smoking currently kills one in ten adults worldwide. By 2030, they estimate the proportion will be one in six. The BMA also states that smoking kills six times more people in the UK than road traffic incidents, poisoning, overdose, murder, manslaughter, suicide and HIV combined.

Reasons smoking causes premature death:

Cancer

As well as lung cancer, smoking can cause cancer of the throat, oesophagus (the tube between your mouth and stomach), bladder, kidney, stomach, and pancreas.

Cerebrovascular disease

The arteries that supply blood to your brain can be damaged by smoking. This is a condition which is known as cerebrovascular disease. This can lead to various health problems including heart failure due to a lack of oxygen.

Pneumonia

Smoking can cause pneumonia. Pneumonia is a potentially fatal infection which causes inflammation of your lungs.

Chronic (long-term) health problems

Smoking can cause many long term health problems including:

- **angina** - chest pains caused by a lack of oxygen to your heart,
- **peripheral vascular disease** - damage to your blood vessels,
- **macular degeneration** - breakdown of the retina causing gradual blindness,
- **impotence**,
- **infertility** - in both men and women,
- **osteoporosis**.
- **skin wrinkling**

Risks of smoking during pregnancy

Smoking can make you less fertile, hence reducing your chances of conceiving. If you smoke, there is a greater chance of complications occurring during pregnancy and labour, such as sickness, miscarriage, and bleeding. Smoking while pregnant can also increase the risk of premature birth and stillbirth.

Your baby may have a lower birth weight, be weaker, and grow more slowly, throughout their childhood.

Health benefits from the moment you stop

The benefits from giving up smoking begin as soon as you stop. The following benefits will also be seen:

- **After one month** - your skin will be clearer, brighter and more hydrated.
- **After 3-9 months** - your breathing will have improved, and you will no longer have a cough or wheeze. Your lung function may have improved by up to 10%.
- **After one year** - your risk of heart attack and heart disease will have fallen to about half that of a smoker.
- **After 10 years** - your risk of lung cancer will have fallen by half.
- **After 15 years** - your risk of heart attack and heart disease will be the same as someone who has never smoked.

Research into smoking shows that people who quit smoking before the age of 35 have a life expectancy only slightly less than people who have never smoked. Those who quit before they are 50 years of age reduce their risk of dying from a smoking-related disease by 50%.

For comprehensive and free health advice and information call in to Whelehans or log on to www.whelehans.ie