



STOP SMOKING
FOR GOOD

YOUR HEALTH

BOOKLET 5

This is Booklet 5 in the *Stop Smoking For Good* series. This booklet covers how smoking affects your health and how your health improves after stopping smoking. Many people quit smoking because they are worried about the health effects of smoking. For people who quit for other reasons (such as the cost), the positive health effects of quitting are a bonus.

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Before you start reading this booklet, take time to list some of the negative health effects of smoking. Then list some of the positive health effects that occur with quitting.

NEGATIVE HEALTH EFFECTS OF SMOKING

[illegible]

POSITIVE HEALTH EFFECTS OF QUITTING SMOKING

[illegible]

Why This Booklet?

Why are we sending you a booklet about smoking and health? You probably already know that smoking is not healthy. Perhaps you even wanted to quit smoking for that reason. We know that showing pictures of black lungs does not help people quit smoking. For this reason, most stop smoking programs do not include scary stories about the health effects of smoking. So why **are** we sending you this booklet?

Because you asked for it. Ex-smokers have told us that they want more information about how quitting smoking improves their health. If you have started smoking again, or haven't quit yet, this information may make you want to try and quit again.

How Harmful Is Smoking?

Smoking is very dangerous! On the average, smoking takes at least 10 years off of a person's life. We can break down that number even more.

- 19% of smokers die before age 60, compared to only 7% of non-smokers.
- 39% of smokers die before age 70, compared to 16% of non-smokers.
- 68% of smokers die before age 80, compared to 35% of non-smokers.

Think about that last number. Two out of three non-smokers live beyond age 80. But two out of three smokers are dead by then!

These numbers do not tell us who will live and who will die. But we do know that more than half of all smokers will die of a disease caused by smoking. If you see two people smoking cigarettes, chances are that at least one of them will die from smoking. You just cannot tell which one it will be. That person will lose, on average, 24 years of life. **“One in two”** – those are high odds! Your odds of dying in a traffic accident are only about 1 in 80. Your odds of being murdered are about 1 in 270. Most people think these odds are too high. So they buckle in and lock their doors at night. But many of these same people keep taking that 1 in 2 chance of being killed by smoking.

Smoking kills nearly 500,000 Americans every year. That's more people than are killed by alcohol, cocaine, heroin, murder, suicide, car accidents, fires, and AIDS... COMBINED! What if three jumbo jets crashed head-on, killing all on board? That would be a tragic event. But that's how many people die from smoking in this country every day.

By quitting smoking, you greatly reduce your chance of being one of those numbers!

What Makes Smoking So Harmful?

Cigarette smoke contains over 7,000 chemicals. You might be surprised at some of them. These chemicals include:

- Cyanide (a deadly poison)
- Arsenic (another poison)
- Strychnine (yet another poison)
- Formaldehyde (a chemical used to preserve dead tissue)
- Methanol (wood alcohol)
- Acetylene (the fuel used in torches)
- Ammonia (what you might use to clean your toilet)
- Acetone (the chemical in fingernail polish remover)

At least 70 of the chemicals in cigarette smoke are known to cause cancer. Approximately 400 others are toxic or harmful. Some of these chemicals are found naturally in tobacco. Some are added by the cigarette companies as preservatives or to enhance flavor.

One of the most dangerous parts of cigarette smoke is **carbon monoxide (CO)**. This is a colorless, odorless gas. It is formed by the burning of substances. It is dangerous because it replaces oxygen in your blood. Your organs, such as your heart and your brain, need oxygen to live. When you smoke, CO prevents these organs from getting all the oxygen that they need.

At very high levels of CO, poisoning can occur. Some of the symptoms of CO poisoning include headache, flushing, yawning, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, and increased pulse rate. In severe cases, coma and death can follow. Carbon monoxide poisoning usually happens in rooms with furnaces that are improperly vented, or when a person breathes in a lot of exhaust fumes from a car.

It is rare for smoking to cause CO poisoning, but CO in cigarette smoke does decrease oxygen, which strains your heart. This strain can lead to heart disease. If you have ever stopped smoking, you may have found that you were able to take deeper breaths. You could exercise longer without getting tired! This is because you were no longer putting CO into your body. Your body got more oxygen instead.



Cigarette smoke also contains **nicotine**. Nicotine is what makes cigarettes addicting. It can also have several bad effects on your body. It increases your pulse rate and blood pressure. This means that your heart has to work harder and needs more oxygen. This strain can also lead to heart disease! Smokers have at least twice the chance of having a heart attack as non-smokers. Research now shows that smokers in their 30s and 40s are 5 times more likely to have heart attacks.

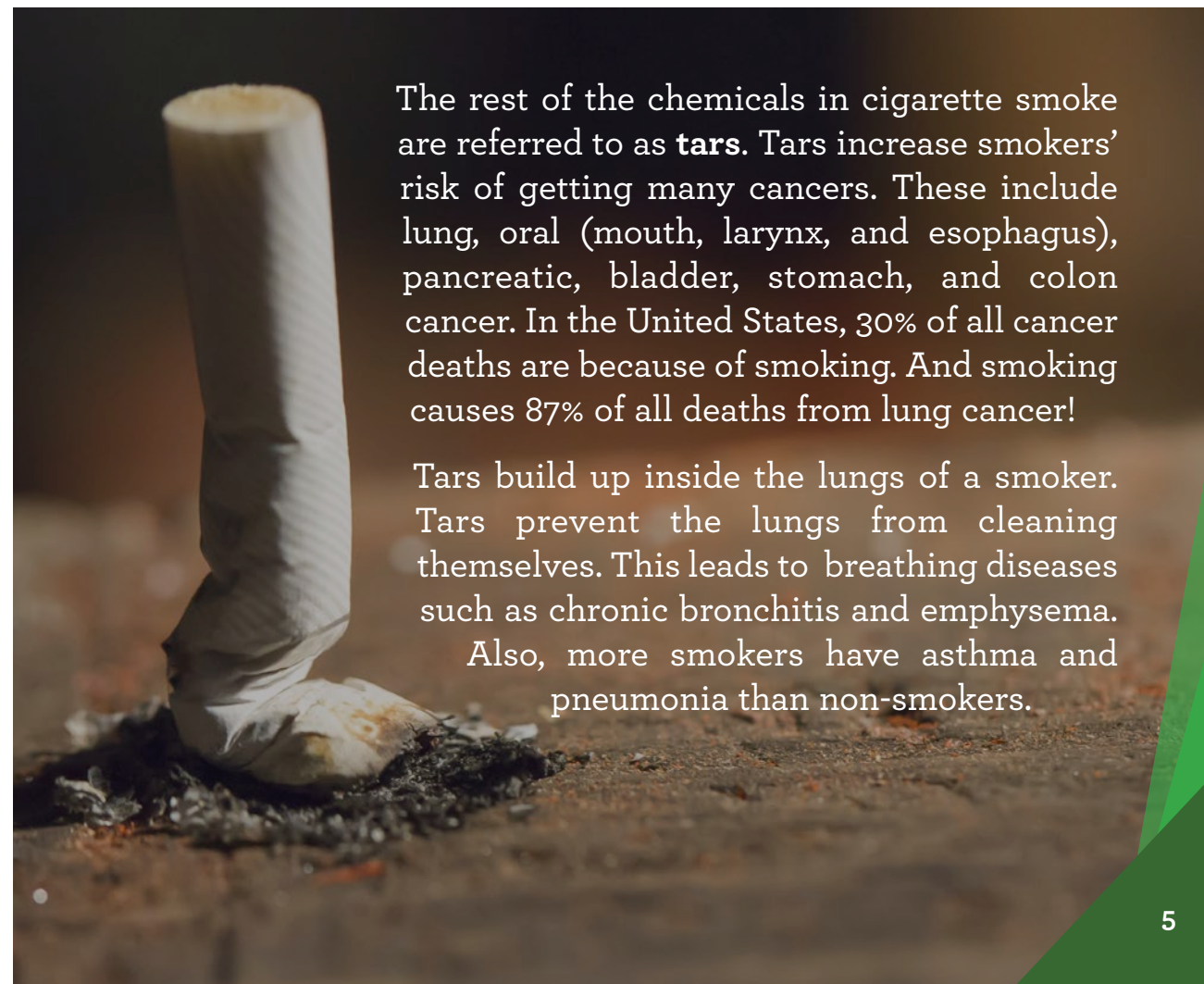
Nicotine gum, patch, lozenge, nasal spray, and inhaler all help people quit smoking. They contain nicotine, but it is delivered to your body much more slowly than with cigarettes. Therefore, they are not usually addicting. Even if you were to use these medications for a long time, at least you would not get all the other 7,000 chemicals in tobacco smoke that cause cancer and other diseases.



The rest of the chemicals in cigarette smoke are referred to as **tars**. Tars increase smokers' risk of getting many cancers. These include lung, oral (mouth, larynx, and esophagus), pancreatic, bladder, stomach, and colon cancer. In the United States, 30% of all cancer deaths are because of smoking. And smoking causes 87% of all deaths from lung cancer!

Tars build up inside the lungs of a smoker. Tars prevent the lungs from cleaning themselves. This leads to breathing diseases such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

Also, more smokers have asthma and pneumonia than non-smokers.



What Happens When You Quit Smoking?

Enough of the bad news. Now for the good news. Quitting smoking is the most important health decision that most people can make. By quitting, you will live longer and you will be able to do so many things better. You will breathe easier, walk further, exercise more, taste food, and smell better. You will just feel and be healthier than you would have if you kept smoking.

The chart on the next page shows how your body recovers after your last cigarette. Your risks of bladder cancer, cervical cancer, cancer of the larynx, and peripheral artery disease are reduced by quitting smoking. Once you quit, your health improves quickly. And the earlier you quit, the greater the chance that you will overcome the risks caused by smoking. But quitting smoking improves your health at any age.

The chart is a general list. There are many more ways that quitting helps your health. How long would it take to describe all of them? Here's a clue. The United States Surgeon General published a report called "The Health Benefits of Smoking Cessation." That report was **928** pages long!



Let's take a look at what happens when you throw away your last cigarette.*

20 minutes after your last cigarette

Most of the nicotine has left your brain. Your blood pressure and pulse rate go back to normal.

8 hours after your last cigarette

The level of carbon monoxide in your blood has decreased to normal. The level of oxygen rises to normal.

24 hours after your last cigarette

Your risk of having a heart attack begins to go down.

2 days after quitting

You can taste and smell things better.

2 weeks after quitting

Your lungs are working better. You have better blood circulation.

1 month after quitting

You cough less and have less shortness of breath. You breathe better and are not as tired.

1 year after quitting

Your risk of heart disease has been cut in half.

5 years after quitting

Your risk of dying of lung cancer has been cut in half. Your risk of oral cancers has also been cut in half.

5-15 years after quitting

Your risk of stroke is about the same as someone who never smoked.

10 years after quitting

Your risk of lung cancer is nearly the same as someone who never smoked. Your risk of pancreatic cancer has also been reduced.

15 years after quitting

Your risk of heart disease is as low as if you never smoked.

*Sources: American Cancer Society; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Quitting Smoking Helps Others, Too

Quitting smoking not only improves your health – it also improves the health of the people around you. People who live or work around smokers also take in the harmful chemicals of tobacco smoke. They breathe in nicotine, carbon monoxide, tars, and the other chemicals.

In fact, non-smokers who spend time around smokers may “smoke” one or two cigarettes per day. These “second-hand smokers” are at risk for the same diseases as smokers. In the United States, 3,000 second-hand smokers die each year from lung cancer.

Second-hand smoke is very bad for babies and young children. Infants and children whose parents smoke are more likely to have asthma, chronic bronchitis, and allergy symptoms. They are also more likely to get pneumonia, middle ear infections, sore throats, and colds. As infants, they are more likely to die of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

Smoking is also harmful to unborn babies. When a pregnant woman smokes, her baby is also smoking. This leads to more miscarriages and other problems.

In the United States, smoking by pregnant women causes 115,000 miscarriages and 5,600 deaths each year. Smoking mothers often have babies who weigh less at birth (which is a sign of trouble). These babies also have smaller heads and don’t grow as fast as other children.

By quitting smoking you help to improve the lives and health of your family, your friends, your co-workers, and others. Is there really any better gift that you can give them?

How Can This Information Help You Stay Quit?

Quitting smoking is probably the most important thing you can do to improve your health. For most people, quitting smoking is more important than losing weight, exercising more, or lowering cholesterol. And these are all healthy changes! But quitting smoking improves your health more than any of these other changes.

So, if you have quit, give yourself a big pat on the back for making such an important change. It is easy to forget that quitting smoking is a “big deal.” Do not forget it. Be proud. Not only does quitting help *you*, it also helps your children, your spouse or partner, and other people who spend time with you. Quitting smoking is something to be proud of!

Sometimes ex-smokers forget the reasons why they quit. We hope this booklet will remind you. The diseases caused by smoking are disabling, painful, and often deadly. When you quit, you now are less likely to get these diseases. You will live longer and feel better.

There may still be times when you have an urge to smoke. Some people find it helpful to remind themselves of the reasons they quit:

Henry quit smoking three months ago. Six months before he quit, he had visited his best friend, Jim, in the hospital. Jim and Henry, both in their mid-50's, used to spend time together smoking. Now Jim has Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). This breathing disease is much more common in smokers than in non-smokers. When Henry saw Jim in the hospital, Jim was breathing with a machine that was put into his throat. Jim had a few more months to live, but he would never be able to breathe on his own again without the machine. Henry saw Jim being moved to a nursing home, where he would spend his last months. Today, when Henry wants to smoke, he thinks about Jim breathing with the machine in his throat. He reminds himself that this could have been him too if he had not quit smoking.

Other people remind themselves of the health benefits they have seen since quitting smoking:

After **Victor** quit smoking, he started forgetting how hard it had been to quit. When he was with his friends who smoked, he sometimes wondered what it would be like to have a cigarette. However, yesterday the elevator in Victor's building was out of order. He had to walk up six flights of stairs to his apartment. As he opened the door, he found that he was not tired or winded, as he would have been before quitting smoking. This reminded Victor of how much quitting improved his health every day.

Still other people like to think of how they helped others by quitting:

Whenever **Gloria** has an urge to smoke, she thinks of her beautiful four-year-old granddaughter, Maria. She used to feel guilty for smoking cigarettes when Maria visited. In fact, Maria would cough and her eyes would water if she was in Gloria's home for more than an hour. Who knows what the smoke was doing to Maria's little lungs? Maria was so happy when Gloria told her that “Grandma does not smoke anymore.” When Gloria thinks about Maria, there is no way she is going to smoke again.



Once again, congratulations for deciding to quit smoking! We hope that you are having success at staying quit. If you have started smoking again, please read the box on the next page.

If You Are Still Smoking or Smoking Again...

Here are some tips that may help:

- ◆ Go back and read *Stop Smoking for Good* Booklets 1 and 2, about the stages of quitting and how to cope with urges to smoke.
- ◆ Pick a new quit date in the near future. Stick to it. If you are not yet smoking as many cigarettes as before, the sooner you quit again, the easier it will be.
- ◆ Use quit-smoking products to help you quit. Think about using the nicotine patch, gum or another product such as Zyban® or CHANTIX™.
- ◆ Make quitting smoking your number one goal.
- ◆ Remember, if you have quit before, you can quit again. Do not feel bad about it. You now know more than you did last time. Use that knowledge to quit again, and stay quit.



The Most Important Messages

You should be proud for deciding to quit smoking and taking a step toward a better and longer life. Once again, congratulations!

We ask that you save this copy of *Stop Smoking For Good* and re-read it many times during the first year or two after quitting. People often forget the important points. To help you remember, here are some important *Stop Smoking For Good* messages.

1

Focus on the health benefits of quitting smoking.

2

Remind yourself of the ways your body begins to repair itself within minutes after quitting.

3

Remember that quitting smoking helps the people around you too.

4

Use the health benefits of not smoking to keep you motivated to stay quit.

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