

## Tobacco Fact Sheet

*Common name for tobacco include: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chew, dip, smoke, butt, snuff, bone, coffin nail, and cancer stick.*

### Facts<sup>1</sup>

- Cigarette smoking is the **leading preventable cause of disease and death** in the U.S.
- **One third of all new smokers** will eventually **die** from tobacco use
- A **pack-a-day** habit costs about **\$1000 per year**
- Smoking causes **cancer, heart disease, lung disease** and **strokes**
- **43%** of people who smoke as few as **three cigarettes** have become addicted

### What problems does tobacco cause?

*More people die from tobacco-related illnesses than from AIDS, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders and suicides combined<sup>1</sup>*

In the short-term, tobacco use results in increased blood pressure and heart rate, increased blood flow from the heart and narrowed arteries. Tobacco also gives you **bad breath, yellow teeth, and smelly clothes**. In the long-term, **tobacco is the cause of many chronic diseases**, including cancer, heart disease, stroke and chronic obstructive lung disease. These tobacco-related diseases often cause **premature death**. On average, someone who smokes a pack or more of cigarettes each day lives **7 years less** than someone who never smoked.<sup>1</sup>

*More than 440,000 people die from tobacco-related illnesses each year<sup>1</sup>*

### Youth Smoking<sup>1</sup>

- **80%** of smokers started **before they were 18** years old
- **9 out of 10** adults began smoking during their teenage years...if you **don't start as a teen**, chances are you'll never smoke
- **1 in 5** youth aged 12-17 are smokers
- Most adolescents **think they can quit**, but after 6 years 75% still smoke
- **Girls** can become addicted in **21 days** compared to **6 months for boys**

### Why do people smoke?

If it's so bad for you, why do people smoke? **Tobacco results in an addiction** to the drug known as nicotine, due to a combination of biological, psychological and socio-cultural factors. All tobacco products contain the nicotine, a drug that is as addictive as cocaine and heroin. **Nicotine causes feelings of reward and arousal**, one of the reasons why smoking is often used as a coping mechanism for handling negative emotions such as stress, anger, pain or depression. Tobacco products are often used out of habit, or as a

way of identifying with social groups. Tobacco is most commonly smoked, but can also be “dipped” or “chewed” allowing the nicotine to be absorbed more quickly via the gums.

### Smoking affecting lifestyles

*Smoking vs Drugs:* Youth smokers are **8 times as likely to use illicit drugs** and **11 times as likely to drink heavily** as non-smoking youth.<sup>2</sup>

*Smoking vs School:* The majority of people start using tobacco before they finish high school. Therefore, **if youth stay smoke-free in school, they will probably never smoke.**<sup>1</sup>

*Smoking vs Grades:* Kids who start smoking are **more likely to get lower grades** in school. They tend to hang out with other kids who smoke, have a **lower self-image** and **don’t know how to say no** to tobacco.<sup>1</sup>

*Second-Hand Smoke:* Smokers are not only hurting themselves, they are hurting people around them. **Second-hand smoke kills about 53,000 people** every year.<sup>1</sup>

### Effects of Physical Activity on Smoking

- ✓ Students who participate in at least one high school sport are **40% less likely to become regular smokers** and 50% less likely to become heavy smokers than those who do not participate in sport<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ Smokers who **exercise vigorously and regularly** are more likely to cut down or stop smoking
- x Its hard to do well at sports and other physical activities if you are short of breath from smoking

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

## Things You Should Know About Tobacco

### Nicotine and other chemicals

**All** tobacco products – cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco – contain **nicotine**. **Nicotine** is a **drug** that is **as addictive** as cocaine and heroin. It is also a poison. One drop of pure nicotine will kill the average-sized person.

**Cigarette smoke** has more than **4,000** chemicals in it. Forty of the chemicals in cigarettes can cause cancer. One ingredient found in cigarettes is **carbon monoxide** (as in car exhaust). Other chemicals in cigarettes include ammonia (used to clean toilets) and arsenic (rat poison). Cigarette butts are the number one source of pollution on beaches.

### Deaths and illnesses

**More people die from tobacco-related illness** than from AIDS, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders and suicides combined. Studies show that **smokers lose 7 minutes of their lives** every time they smoke a cigarette. **Smoking** causes **cancer, heart disease, lung disease** and **strokes**. Smokers as young as 18 have shown signs of heart disease. Smoking causes **87% of all lung cancers**. One third of all new smokers will eventually die from tobacco use.

### Tobacco Companies

Tobacco companies spend **\$16 million every day** to advertise cigarettes. Tobacco ads are often aimed at new, young smokers. Tobacco companies try to make smoking look cool by using good-looking models. **Tobacco gives you bad breath, yellow teeth, and clothes that smell like an ashtray.** They don't advertise that!

### Teens

**80%** of smokers started **before they were 18** years old. **43%** of people who smoke as few as three cigarettes become **addicted**. If you don't start as a teen, chances are you'll never smoke. 70% of teens don't smoke. Teens who smoke cough and wheeze three times more than non-smoking teens. It's hard to do well at sports and other physical activities if you are short of breath from smoking.

### Second-hand smoke

Smokers not only hurt themselves – they hurt people around them. **Secondhand smoke** kills about 53,000 people every year. Smoking during pregnancy increases the risk of having a miscarriage. Babies whose parents smoke are seven times more likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Children of parents who smoke have more colds, flu, ear infections and asthma.

### *“Other” forms of tobacco*

**Cigars and chewing tobacco** contain cancer-causing chemicals, just like cigarettes. Because of their size, smoking **one cigar** is like smoking about **10 cigarettes**. Cigar smokers are 4 to 10 times more likely to suffer from cancer of the throat, larynx and esophagus than nonsmokers. **Smokeless tobacco** makes you spit slimy brown tobacco juice. Smokeless tobacco causes cancer of the mouth, tongue and throat.

### *Quitting*

**If you do smoke, the best thing you can do is quit.** About **70% of people** who smoke wish they could quit. Within days of quitting, a smoker’s sense of taste and smell returns to normal. Five to ten years after quitting, a smoker’s risk of heart disease returns to that of a nonsmoker. Half of all Americans who ever smoked have now quit.

**YOU DON’T NEED IT!** Take care of your health and your future. You’re worth it!

### *For more information:*

#### **Tobacco and Disease**

<http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/tepp/index.htm>

#### **Quitting Tobacco**

[www.ashline.org](http://www.ashline.org)

#### **Smoking and Cardiovascular Disease**

<http://www.americanheart.org>

#### **Tobacco Control**

<http://www.lungusa.org/tobacco/>

#### **Chronic Disease Prevention**

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp>