



Smoking and Your Health



Overview

We all know cigarette smoking is bad for you. We know it hurts your lungs. But did you know it can hurt you in other ways, too? Let's learn about the ways smoking affects your body.

Mouth and lungs

When tobacco burns, it releases smoke filled with toxic chemicals. When you inhale this smoke, you expose your airways to these toxins. This harms the tissues of your mouth, throat and lungs. It can cause dental problems. It can cause cancer cells to form. But the harm doesn't stop there.

Eyes and ears

Smoking can damage your eyes and ears, too. In the eyes, it can increase your risk for cataracts and macular degeneration. These can lead to blindness. In the ears, it can reduce oxygen to the cochlea. That's a structure in your inner ear. A damaged cochlea can cause permanent hearing loss.

Muscles and bones

Smoking also harms your muscles and bones. It makes your muscles tire more easily, and it makes it harder for your body to build muscle tissue. Smoking interferes with the growth of your bones. It makes your bones more likely to fracture. And in smokers, bone fractures take longer to heal.

Immune system

And finally, smoking can interfere with your immune system's ability to fight off infections. So if you smoke, you may find that you get sick more often than other people.

Conclusion

Talk to your doctor to learn more about the health affects of smoking, and how to quit.