

## Smoking

Cigarette smoking has been identified as the most important source of preventable disease and illness and premature mortality death worldwide. Smoking-related diseases claim an estimated 443,000 American lives each year, including those affected indirectly, such as babies born prematurely due to prenatal maternal smoking and victims of "secondhand" exposure to tobacco's carcinogens.



### Smoking Prevalence

- In 2009, an estimated 46.6 million, or 20.6% of adults (aged 18+) were current smokers. The annual prevalence of smoking declined more than 50 percent between 1965 and 2009.
- Males tend to have significantly higher rates of smoking prevalence than females. In 2009, 23.5 percent of males currently smoked compared to 17.9 percent of females.
- In 2009, 19.5 percent of high school students were current smokers. Over 5 percent of middle school students were current smokers in 2009.

### Health Hazards of Smoking

- Cigarette smoke contains over 4,800 chemicals, 69 of which are known to cause cancer.
- The list of diseases caused by smoking includes chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD, including chronic bronchitis and emphysema), coronary heart disease, stroke, abdominal aortic aneurysm, acute myeloid leukemia, cataract, pneumonia, periodontitis, and bladder, esophageal, laryngeal, lung, oral, throat, cervical, kidney, stomach, and pancreatic cancers. Smoking is also a major factor in a variety of other conditions and disorders, including slowed healing of wounds, infertility, and peptic ulcer disease.
- Smokers die earlier than nonsmokers: men 13.2 years and women 14.5 years.

### Secondhand Smoke

- Secondhand smoke involuntarily inhaled by nonsmokers from other people's cigarettes is responsible for approximately 3,400 lung cancer deaths and 46,000 (ranging 22,700-69,600) heart disease deaths in adult nonsmokers annually in the United States.
- Smoking by parents is associated with a wide range of adverse effects in their children, including exacerbation of asthma, increased frequency of colds and ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Secondhand smoke causes more than an estimated 202,000 asthma episodes, 790,000 physician visits for buildup of fluid in the middle ear (otitis media, or middle ear infection), and 430 SIDS cases each year.

### Quitting Smoking

- Nicotine is an addictive drug, which when inhaled in cigarette smoke reaches the brain faster than drugs that enter the body intravenously. Smokers not only become physically addicted to nicotine; they also link smoking with many social activities, making smoking a difficult habit to break.
- Quitting smoking often requires multiple attempts. Using counseling or medication alone increases the chance of a quit attempt being successful; the combination of both is even more effective.

Information provided by:  
American Lung Association  
[www.lung.org](http://www.lung.org)