



SMOKING

Tobacco smoking is the largest preventable cause of premature death and disease in Australia. Every year, about 20,000 Australians die from diseases caused by smoking. Passive smoking is also a hazard to health. Children of parents who smoke get more coughs, colds, asthma and respiratory infections. Quitting smoking at any age will result in major and immediate health benefits. With planning and determination you can quit and stay a non-smoker.

Smoking effects

Harm to yourself

What you inhale – Tobacco smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals. The most harmful of these chemicals are:

- Tar - lower tar or 'light' cigarettes aren't any better as you are likely to take deeper puffs, sucking more tar into your lungs.
- Carbon monoxide - is a major component of tobacco smoke, it leaves your muscles, heart and brain with less oxygen.
- Nicotine - is a drug that is addictive and can make it very hard, but not impossible, to quit.

Cancers – smokers are 10 times more likely to die from lung cancer than non-smokers. Smoking is a major cause of cancers of the mouth (tongue, lips, and gums). There is also a link between smoking and stomach cancer.

Heart disease – smoking causes hardening of the arteries resulting in angina, heart attacks and strokes.

Lung disease – ten times the risk of death from bronchitis and emphysema. More likely to get pneumonia.

Women who smoke – run a greater risk of osteoporosis, cancer of the cervix and vulva,

menstrual problems and an earlier menopause. Women who smoke and use oral contraceptives place themselves at a greater risk of heart disease.

Sex and fertility – males who smoke may have a lower than normal sperm count and more abnormal sperm. Damage to the blood vessels in the penis can lead to impotence. Female smokers are less fertile and have a greater risk of miscarriage and complications in pregnancy and labour.

Harm to others

Passive smoking – second-hand smoke comes from both the burning end of a cigarette and from the smoke breathed out by a smoker. This harms not just the smoker, but also family members and co-workers. Passive smoking causes heart disease in non-smokers living with smokers.

Pregnancy and babies – Babies born of smokers are lower in birth weight.

Smoking by the mother is one of the major risk factors for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS or 'cot death').

Babies of smokers are more likely to have respiratory infections and asthma.

Children exposed to smoke are more likely to snore and cough during the night and exposure can worsen asthma.



Why quit

Quitting makes a difference straight away. You can taste and smell food better. You smell better. Your cough goes away. You will have fewer days of illness and fewer health complaints.

Many of the bad effects of smoking can be reversed after quitting within:

- A few months - your heart and lungs will be healthier
- Twelve months - your risk of heart disease will be halved.
- A few years - your risk of lung cancer is reduced
- Quitting saves money!

Medicines to help you quit

You don't have to go 'cold turkey' to quit smoking. Medicines are available to help. They are not the complete quitting solution and work best when used as part of an overall plan to quit. Motivation to quit is vital.

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)

- The most common reasons for relapse into smoking are withdrawal symptoms and the severity of cravings primarily caused by nicotine depletion. NRT replaces some of the nicotine you crave when stopping smoking and helps reduce the body's need for nicotine.
- NRT can double the chances of success compared to willpower alone.
- NRT works best for people who smoke 10 or more cigarettes per day.
- NRT is available as a gum, skin patch, inhaler or lozenge and is available over the counter in pharmacies.

Bupropion hydrochloride tablets

Bupropion hydrochloride is a non-nicotine medicine that can be prescribed by a doctor as a short-term treatment to help stop smoking.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about which product is suitable for you. Remember to tell them if you are taking any other medicines or have other conditions, such as heart disease.

Your **Self Care** Pharmacist



KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN
DAVID S. NOLTE PHARMACY
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nicorette
(nicotine)

Pharmacy Self Care has a strong commitment to providing current and reliable health information.
The information in this card was current at time of printing.

Self care

Getting ready to quit

- Prepare yourself for quitting - set a date (e.g. during a holiday).
- Read the *Relaxation Techniques* Fact Card.
- Find a friend to quit with you.
- Know when and why you smoke.
- Change your smoking routines.
- Ask a smoker who has quit just how great they feel.
- Start exercising and combine this with healthy eating (see *Exercise and the Heart* and *Weight & Health* Fact Cards).
- Make a choice to live a healthy life.

On the day you quit

- Get rid of all your cigarettes.
- Put away your ashtrays.
- When you get the urge to smoke, do something else.
- Reward yourself at the end of each day for not smoking.

Staying quit

- Read the tips on the *Staying a Non-Smoker* Fact Card.

Recommended reading

Quit because you can

Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria 1997

Available on line:

<http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/quitnow/quitbook/index2.htm>
www.nicorette.com.au

Other relevant Fact Cards

- *Staying a Non-Smoker*
- *Relaxation Techniques*
- *Exercise and the Heart*
- *Weight & Health*

Contact

Your doctor — listed under 'Medical Practitioners' in the yellow pages of the phone book

Your state anti-cancer body — listed under 'Cancer' in the white pages of the phone book

Your state Quit office — phone Quitline 131 848

Your Self Care pharmacist. To find: (02) 6283 4777

In case of poisoning phone the **Poisons Information Centre** on 131 126 from anywhere in Australia.

Pharmacists are medicines experts. Ask your pharmacist for advice when choosing a medicine.

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