

## When smokers quit — what are the benefits over time?

### **20 minutes after quitting**

Your heart rate and blood pressure drop.

(Effect of smoking on arterial stiffness and pulse pressure amplification, Mahmud A, Feely J. *Hypertension*. 2003;41:183)

### **12 hours after quitting**

The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1988, p. 202)

### **2 weeks to 3 months after quitting**

Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1990, pp.193, 194,196, 285, 323)

### **1 to 9 months after quitting**

Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) start to regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1990, pp. 285-287, 304)

### **1 year after quitting**

The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker's.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 2010, p. 359)

### **5 years after quitting**

Risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder are cut in half. Cervical cancer risk falls to that of a non-smoker. Stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2-5 years.

(*A Report of the Surgeon General: How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease - The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease Fact Sheet, 2010*; and *Tobacco Control: Reversal of Risk After Quitting Smoking. IARC Handbooks of Cancer Prevention, Vol. 11. 2007*, p 341)

### **10 years after quitting**

The risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking.

The risk of cancer of the larynx (voice box) and pancreas decreases.

(*A Report of the Surgeon General: How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease - The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease Fact Sheet, 2010*; and *US Surgeon General's Report*, 1990, pp. vi, 155, 165)

### **15 years after quitting**

The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker's.

(*Tobacco Control: Reversal of Risk After Quitting Smoking. IARC Handbooks of Cancer Prevention, Vol. 11. 2007*. p 11)

These are just a few of the benefits of quitting smoking for good. Quitting smoking lowers the risk of diabetes, lets blood vessels work better, and helps the heart and lungs. Quitting while you are younger will reduce your health risks more, but quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost by continuing to smoke.

## Immediate rewards of quitting

Kicking the tobacco habit offers some benefits that you'll notice right away and some that will develop over time. These rewards improve most peoples' day-to-day lives a great deal:

- Breath smells better
- Stained teeth get whiter
- Bad smelling clothes and hair go away
- Yellow fingers and fingernails disappear
- Food tastes better
- Sense of smell returns to normal
- Everyday activities (such as climbing stairs or light housework) no longer leave them out of breath
- You can be in smoke-free buildings without having to go outside to smoke.