

tobacco: straight talk for teens



Most teens don't smoke

Did you know that about 80% of teens in the United States don't smoke? They've made a healthy choice.

But think about this:

- One third of all new smokers will eventually die of smoking-related diseases.
- And nearly 90% of all smokers started when they were teens.

This is what smoking does to your body

- Carbon monoxide in tobacco smoke takes oxygen from your body.
- Your lungs will turn gray and disgusting.
- Nicotine, a drug contained in tobacco, can cause your heart to beat faster and work less effectively.

Tobacco can kill

Each time you take a puff on a cigarette, you inhale **400 toxic chemicals like:**

- Nicotine (a drop of pure nicotine can **kill**)
- Cyanide (a deadly **poison**)
- Benzene (used in **making paints**, dyes, and plastics)
- Formaldehyde (used to **preserve dead bodies**)
- Acetylene (fuel used in **torches**)
- Ammonia (used in **fertilizers**)
- Carbon monoxide (**poisonous gas**)

Athletes who smoke can't run or swim as well as nonsmoking athletes because their bodies get less oxygen. This is why coaches tell athletes never to smoke.

Before you start smoking or if you're trying to quit...think about this:

It's a proven fact that the earlier a person starts smoking, the greater the risk of these diseases:

- Cancer
- Heart disease
- Chronic bronchitis—a serious disease of the airways to the lung
- Emphysema—a crippling lung disease

Smoking is addictive

Some of the chemicals in cigarettes cause people to become addicted very soon after they start smoking. If you are a smoker, you'll know you're addicted when

- You crave cigarettes.
- You feel nervous without cigarettes.
- You try to quit smoking and have trouble doing it.

Quitting can be hard, and it can take a long time.

The longer you smoke, the harder it is to stop.

If you're already addicted, there's help available to you.

Smoking is ugly

- Smoking causes **bad breath** and **stained teeth**. Some teens say that kissing someone who smokes is like kissing an ashtray.
- Smoking often makes other people not want to be around you.
- Smoking stinks. If you smoke you may not smell smoke on you, but other people do.
- Studies show that most teens would rather date someone who doesn't smoke.

Smoking costs a lot of money

Do the math

One pack of cigarettes per day	\$3
Multiplied by the days in a year	x 365
Yearly cost for cigarettes	\$1,095

That's more than **\$1,000 a year** that you could be spending on CDs, clothes, a car, or college.

Chewing tobacco and snuff ("dip") are just as bad for you.

If you use smokeless tobacco you are at increased risk for illnesses that hurt your mouth, such as cancer and gum disease. You could lose some teeth. Also, you probably won't be able to taste or smell things as well as before.

Tobacco companies are targeting YOU

Tobacco companies spend billions of dollars every year promoting their products on TV, in movies and magazines, on billboards, and at sporting events. Teens are the main targets of many of these ads.

Most ads falsely show smokers as healthy, energetic, sexy, and successful.

The tobacco companies and advertisers don't mention the bad effects of smoking, like cancer, heart disease, bad breath, and stained teeth.

The fact is, tobacco companies need 3,000 new smokers every day to make up for the 400,000 people who die each year from tobacco-related diseases.

Think about it.

Quitting

If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do for yourself, your friends, and your family.

Myth

Many teens think they are not at risk from smoking. They tell themselves, "I won't smoke forever," or "I can quit any time."

Fact

If you ignore the warning signs and continue to smoke, your body will change. It will get used to the smoke. You won't cough or feel sick every time you puff on a cigarette, yet the damage to your body will get worse each time you smoke.

Deciding to stop smoking is up to you. Once you make the commitment to stop, get support from friends and family. You can get help from your pediatrician or school health office as well.

If you don't succeed at quitting the first time,
keep trying.

From your doctor

For more information, visit the Web site of the American Academy of Pediatrics at **www.aap.org** or contact any of the following organizations:

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
800/803-7178
www.tobaccofreekids.org

The truth: A campaign developed by teens
www.thetruth.com

American Cancer Society
800/ACS-2345 (800/227-2345)
www.cancer.org

American Heart Association
800/242-8721
www.americanheart.org

American Lung Association
800/586-4872
www.lungusa.org

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