

# If you don't want to think about your health, think about your image.

**Smoking makes a person look bad!** Smoking causes sallow, dry skin leading to early wrinkles. Smoking also causes "nicotine stains" on the teeth, lips and fingers.

**Smoking makes a person feel bad!** Smoking makes a person tired, nervous and short of breath.

**Smoking makes a person smell bad!** Smoking makes hair and clothes smell like stale tobacco and causes "ashtray" breath.

**Smoking makes a person poor!** Cigarettes are expensive. Think of what else you could buy with that money.

*Society is beginning to isolate smokers. Do you want to be banished to the smoking area for the rest of your life?*



**Nicotine is as addictive as heroin.**

**If you haven't started using tobacco...  
don't even try it.**

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# The Truth About TOBACCO

# Clear The Smoke Screen

## What is tobacco?

Tobacco is a plant whose leaves are dried and processed into cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco and snuff. Tobacco can be smoked, chewed, sucked or inhaled. Tobacco contains thousands of poisonous chemicals, probably the most dangerous is nicotine.

## What is nicotine?

Nicotine is the addictive, stimulant drug found in tobacco. When a person smokes a cigarette, cigar or pipe, the nicotine contained in the smoke enters the lungs and passes through the cell lining into the bloodstream. When smokeless tobacco is chewed or sucked, the nicotine in the tobacco juice is absorbed through the membranes in the mouth. It also mixes with saliva and travels to the stomach and intestines and then enters the bloodstream. Once in the bloodstream, nicotine quickly reaches the brain.

## What are the short-term effects of nicotine?

After only a few puffs of a cigarette, nicotine quickly reaches the brain and stimulates the nervous system. Nicotine causes the heart to beat faster and makes it more difficult for the lungs, stomach and kidneys to do their jobs efficiently.

## What are the long-term effects of nicotine?

The damage begins with the first cigarette or use of smokeless tobacco. Continued use of tobacco can cause serious illness and death. Heart attacks, strokes, lung diseases (bronchitis, emphysema, lung cancer), oral cancer and many other cancers have been linked directly to tobacco. Serious lung diseases are 10 times more likely to occur in those who smoke. Smokeless tobacco causes fast-spreading cancers of the mouth, larynx and esophagus, which have killed people in their teens and twenties.

Nicotine harms more than just the smoker himself. Women who smoke during pregnancy increase the chances of low birth weights, premature births, and infant deaths. Even non-smokers can have health problems if exposed to the smoke of others.

**Don't get  
hooked on  
tobacco.  
Get hooked  
on health!**

## How do people become addicted to nicotine?

People underestimate the addictive power of nicotine. The body can become "hooked" in a very short time. A person often craves nicotine and feels nervous if he stops using tobacco, making it difficult to quit. Once hooked, most people wish they had never used tobacco and had listened to the warnings. Fortunately, it is possible to quit using tobacco. Quitting isn't easy and it takes a strong commitment, but having a healthy body is worth the effort.

## Why do young people use tobacco?

Young people often start using tobacco in middle or junior high to make them feel more grown-up or look "cool." Much feel pressured by their friends to use tobacco to "fit in" and be a part of the crowd. Some have parents who smoke and think it isn't risky.

Even though young people have heard about the dangers of tobacco, many think they will live forever and don't have to worry about illness or death. The fact is, smoking is one of the most preventable causes of cancer and other diseases that can result in an early death. Cigarettes, like alcohol, are gateway drugs that can lead to the abuse of other illegal substances.

## Is nicotine illegal?

Nicotine is not illegal, but the purchase of tobacco products is illegal for young people in most states. Although legal, cigarettes, chewing tobacco and other tobacco products kill a significant number of the people who use them.

## What can smart people do instead of using tobacco?

Running... hiking... sports... aerobics... chewing sugarless gum... eating healthy snacks... riding a bicycle... dancing... taking care of a pet... visiting sick people... calling your best friend for a long chat. Get hooked on health!

