

Stop Smoking  
Start Living



# Last Class: Health and Wellness

Last class we looked at health and wellness, before, during and after the quitting process. We brainstormed that activities might help ourselves to lead a better life health wise.

# Discussion

Do you know someone who has quit smoking? How did they do it? How long did it take them? What was their life like after quitting?

# The Effects of Smoking on the Body

Tobacco smoke is enormously harmful to your health. There's no safe way to smoke. Replacing your cigarette with a cigar, pipe, or hookah won't help you avoid the health risks associated with tobacco products.

Cigarettes contain about 600 ingredients. When they burn, they generate more than 7,000 chemicals, according to the American Lung Association. Many of those chemicals are poisonous and at least 69 of them can cause cancer. Many of the same ingredients are found in cigars and in tobacco used in pipes and hookahs. According to the National Cancer Institute, cigars have a higher level of carcinogens, toxins, and tar than cigarettes.

# Central Nervous System

- One of the ingredients in tobacco is a mood-altering drug called nicotine. Nicotine reaches your brain in mere seconds. It's a central nervous system stimulant, so it makes you feel more energized for a little while. As that effect subsides, you feel tired and crave more. Nicotine is habit forming.
- Smoking increases risk of macular degeneration, cataracts, and poor eyesight. It can also weaken your sense of taste and sense of smell, so food may become less enjoyable.
- Your body has a stress hormone called corticosterone, which lowers the effects of nicotine. If you're under a lot of stress, you'll need more nicotine to get the same effect.
- Physical withdrawal from smoking can impair your cognitive functioning and make you feel anxious, irritated, and depressed. Withdrawal can also cause headaches and sleep problems.

# Respiratory System

- When you inhale smoke, you're taking in substances that can damage your lungs. Over time, your lungs lose their ability to filter harmful chemicals. Coughing can't clear out the toxins sufficiently, so these toxins get trapped in the lungs. Smokers have a higher risk of respiratory infections, colds, and flu.
- In a condition called emphysema, the air sacs in your lungs are destroyed. In chronic bronchitis, the lining of the tubes of the lungs becomes inflamed. Over time, smokers are at increased risk of developing these forms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Long-term smokers are also at increased risk of lung cancer.
- Withdrawal from tobacco products can cause temporary congestion and respiratory pain as your lungs begin to clear out.
- Children whose parents smoke are more prone to coughing, wheezing, and asthma attacks than children whose parents don't. They also tend to have more ear infections. Children of smokers have higher rates of pneumonia and bronchitis.

# Cardiovascular System

- Smoking damages your entire cardiovascular system. When nicotine hits your body, it gives your blood sugar a boost. After a short time, you're left feeling tired and craving more. Nicotine causes blood vessels to tighten, which restricts the flow of blood (peripheral artery disease). Smoking lowers good cholesterol levels and raises blood pressure, which can result in stretching of the arteries and a buildup of bad cholesterol (atherosclerosis).
- Smoking raises the risk of forming blood clots. Blood clots and weakened blood vessels in the brain increase a smoker's risk of stroke.
- There's a risk to nonsmokers, too. Breathing secondhand smoke has an immediate effect on the cardiovascular system. Exposure to secondhand smoke increases your risk of stroke, heart attack, and coronary heart disease.

# Skin, Hair & Nails

- The substances in tobacco smoke actually change the structure of your skin.
- Smoking causes skin discoloration, wrinkles, and premature aging. Your fingernails and the skin on your fingers may have yellow staining from holding cigarettes. Smokers usually develop yellow or brown stains on their teeth.
- Hair holds on to the smell of tobacco long after you put your cigarette out. It even clings to nonsmokers

# Digestive System

- Smokers are at great risk of developing oral problems. Tobacco use can cause gum inflammation (gingivitis) or infection (periodontitis). These problems can lead to tooth decay, tooth loss, and bad breath.
- Smoking also increases risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, larynx, and esophagus. Smokers have higher rates of kidney cancer and pancreatic cancer. Even cigar smokers who don't inhale are at increased risk of mouth cancer.
- Smoking also has an effect on insulin, making it more likely that you'll develop insulin resistance. That puts you at increased risk of type 2 diabetes. When it comes to diabetes, smokers tend to develop complications at a faster rate than nonsmokers.
- Smoking also depresses appetite, so you may not be getting all the nutrients your body needs. Withdrawal from tobacco products can cause nausea.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JC5yWEyw7bs>



# However! After quitting.....

- Your blood circulation improves
- You might gain a little weight
- Your heart will love you again
- Your stroke risk drops dramatically
- You'll breathe a lot better
- You'll cough a bit more
- You'll have a brighter smile
- Your skin will glow – and you'll slow the aging process
- You'll smell better
- Food tastes better
- Your immune system improves

# Daily Take Away

Each class, we will devote the last ten minutes to a "Daily Take Away". This is an opportunity for everyone to take one piece of advice or information, from the day's class, and determine how it is going to impact you, until the next time we meet.

*Example: Most people are not successful the first time they try to quit smoking*

*Outcome: If I fail to quit, I need to start over again.*

Take a moment to think about your take away for the week. If desired, share it with the class; help others hold you accountable.

***Class Challenge:***

***Think about what area of your health is most affected by your habit. How will permanently quitting, change that for you?***

