

# Why Quit ?

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## Your Health

Regardless of a smoker's age, smoking history, or health status, there are benefits to quitting smoking:

- Quitting smoking decreases the risk of **lung cancer**, and many other kinds of cancer, including **cancer of the mouth, voice box (larynx), bladder, kidney, pancreas and cervix**.<sup>1</sup>
- Quitting smoking decreases the risk of **respiratory diseases** such as **emphysema, chronic bronchitis, pneumonia, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)**.
- Quitting smoking reduces the risk of stroke and heart disease. Smokers have twice the risk of dying of **heart attacks** as non-smokers. Also, smoking is a major risk factor for **peripheral vascular disease**, a narrowing of the blood vessels that carry blood to the leg and arm muscles.
- Smoking causes **premature wrinkling** of the skin<sup>2</sup>, **bad breath, bad-smelling clothes and hair, and yellow fingernails**.<sup>3</sup>
- **Ex-smokers have fewer health complaints** and better self-reported health status.
- **People who quit smoking live longer** than those who continue to smoke.

## Cost

**Smoking is expensive.** To figure out how much you spend on cigarettes per year: multiply the number of packs you smoke per day (be honest) by the cost per pack. Then multiply by 365 days per year. Multiply the cost per year by 10 (for the upcoming ten years of smoking). What would you rather do with that much money?

## Setting an Example

**Children whose parents smoke are more likely to start smoking themselves.** You can become a good role model for them by quitting now (and protect them from secondhand smoke).

## When smokers quit - the benefits over time

- **20 minutes after quitting:** blood pressure drops to a level close to that before the last cigarette. Temperature of hands and feet increases to normal.<sup>4</sup> Heart rate drops.<sup>5</sup>
- **12 hours after quitting:** carbon monoxide level in the blood drops to normal.
- **24 hours after quitting:** chance of heart attack decreases.
- **2 weeks to 3 months after quitting:** circulation improves; lung function increases.
- **1 to 9 months after quitting:** coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue, and shortness of breath decrease; cilia regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce infection.
- **1 year after quitting:** excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.
- **5 years after quitting:** stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker 5-15 years after quitting.
- **10 years after quitting:** lung cancer death rate is about half that of a continuing smoker's; risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas decreases.
- **15 years after quitting:** The risk of death for ex-smokers returns to nearly the level of persons who have never smoked.

**For help quitting, call the Utah Tobacco Quit Line at 1.888.567.TRUTH or visit [utahquitnet.com](http://utahquitnet.com)**

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<sup>1</sup> [The Health Benefits of Smoking Cessation: A Report of the Surgeon General](#), 1990, pp.vi, 92, 131,148,152,155,164,166,193,194,196,285-287,304,323

<sup>2</sup> Women and Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General, 2001. [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr\\_forwomen](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr_forwomen) Accessed August 2006.

<sup>3</sup> American Cancer Society, [http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED\\_10\\_13X\\_Guide\\_for\\_Quitting\\_Smoking.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_10_13X_Guide_for_Quitting_Smoking.asp) Accessed August 2006.

<sup>4</sup> American Lung Association, [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org) Accessed August 2006.

<sup>5</sup> [The Health Consequences of Smoking: Nicotine Addiction: A Report of the Surgeon General](#), 1988, pp. 39, 202