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AGES & STAGES

For Teens: Straight Talk about Smoking

That's almost \$2,300 a year that you could be saving or spending on other things like clothes, a car, or something fun!



Nicotine Makes Tobacco Use Addictive

Nicotine in tobacco causes people to become addicted much sooner than they expect after they start using. This happens to teens too. You're addicted if

- You crave your cigarettes or other tobacco.
- You feel nervous without your cigarettes.
- You try to quit using and have trouble doing it.

If you're already addicted, there's help available to you. You can successfully quit smoking with help and support. Just ask your doctor or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Other Nicotine Products

Many people believe other forms of tobacco, such as e-cigarettes or chewing tobacco, are safer than smoking because they are not inhaling smoke. However, this is not true. These products still contain many dangerous chemicals and ingredients that can cause harm to the body.

- If you use [smokeless tobacco](#) (/English/health-issues/conditions/tobacco/Pages/Dangers-of-Chew.aspx) you are at increased risk for illnesses harming your mouth, such as cancer and gum disease. You could lose some teeth, part of your face, or your life. Also, you probably won't be able to taste or smell things very well.
- [Electronic cigarettes](#) (/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/E-cigarettes.aspx) are very addictive. Recently, electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes marketed as a way for users to inhale nicotine without smoking.
- Smoking cigars, bidis, clove, or menthol cigarettes is not any safer.
- Chewing tobacco and snuff ("dip") are just as bad for you. If you use smokeless tobacco you are at increased risk for illnesses harming your mouth, such as cancer and gum disease. You could lose some teeth, part of your face, or your life. Also, you probably won't be able to taste or smell things very well.

Quitting is Possible

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

- **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:** Most people find it is not easy to quit.

As you 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 continue to worsen, and you won't even notice...for a while.

Deciding to stop using tobacco is up to you. It takes real courage to quit! Once you make the commitment to stop, get support from friends and family. Ask your pediatrician or school health office for help.

If you don't succeed at quitting the first time, you are not a failure. Keep trying! Most people need more than one quit attempt to succeed. Practice makes perfect!

Additional Resources:

- [The Dangers of Secondhand Smoke](#) (/English/health-issues/conditions/tobacco/Pages/Dangers-of-Secondhand-Smoke.aspx)
- [Julius B. Richmond Center of Excellence – Information for Kids and Teens](#) (http://www2.aap.org/richmondcenter/ForKids_Teens.html) (AAP.org)
- [Tips from Former Smokers](#) (<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/>) (CDC.gov)
- [The Real Cost](#) (<http://therealcost.betobaccofree.hhs.gov/>) (HHS.gov)
- [theTruth.com](#) (<http://www.thetruth.com/>) (anti-tobacco campaign developed for teens)

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HONcode standard for trustworthy health (<http://www.healthonnet.org/HONcode/Conduct.html>)

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