

Kick The Habit!

# Understanding SMOKING

Margarita  
Camche  
Smoking  
Cessation  
Program



**Mount  
Sinai**

# The more you know, the easier it is to quit.

## How Did I Get This Addiction?

You were most likely a teenager when you started smoking and didn't know about the dangers of cigarette smoke. Or perhaps you thought you could stop anytime. It's true, not everyone who smokes gets addicted. You probably know people who were able to quit without any trouble. But some people get addicted more easily than others. This is often passed on through the family, in other words, it's in their DNA. It is important to know that each person's body handles nicotine differently. Becoming addicted to nicotine depends on your body's chemistry and not on whether you are a strong or weak person.

## How Smoking Affects Your Body

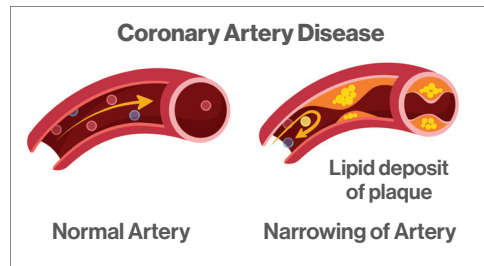
When you smoke cigarettes, chemicals and nicotine enter your body and reach your lungs. In your lungs, the chemicals enter your bloodstream and travel throughout your body, reaching all your organs where they cause damage. Nicotine reaches your brain and gives you pleasure.

## It Changes Your Looks and Your Senses

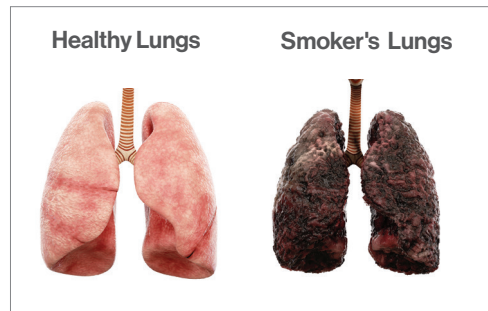
Smoking can make it difficult to smell and to taste. It ages your skin, causes gum disease and tooth loss. Cigarette smoke odor clings to your skin, hair and clothing.

## But This Is the Real Damage

Inside your body, smoking causes inflammation (like a burn) and plaque (like rust). It can also make your blood thick which increases the chance of getting a heart attack or stroke.

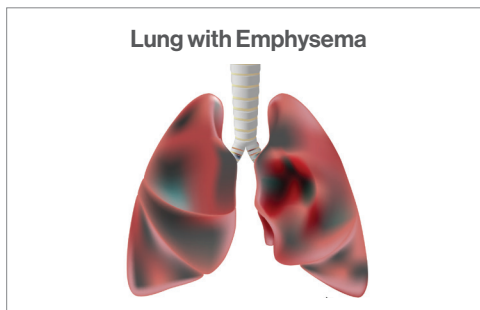


Smoking leaves tar and hot chemicals in your lungs that can cause cancer and emphysema.



## *Quitting smoking as soon as possible is the most important thing you can do for your health.*

Emphysema causes holes in your lungs. In the beginning, emphysema can make it hard to breathe when you exercise, run, or do other stressful activities. But as it gets worse, going up stairs and even walking can become difficult. The only way to stop the damage is to quit smoking. Below is a picture of a lung with emphysema. You can see the holes and the black tar from cigarettes.



Lung Cancer is most often caused by chemicals inhaled from cigarettes. Many people think it's just nicotine that you have to watch out for. But there are many other chemicals in smoke that are harmful and cause cancer. They enter your throat, bloodstream, and even your urine. Cancer of the lung, esophagus, larynx (voice box), mouth, throat, kidney, bladder, pancreas, stomach, cervix, and blood (leukemia) can all be caused by the chemicals in cigarette smoke.

Quitting smoking as soon as possible is the most important thing you can do for your health. The risk of cancer goes down steadily when you quit, and the sooner you succeed, the better. Ask your doctor for a lung cancer screening CT scan, because when lung cancer is found early, it's often curable.

## How Quitting Affects Your Body

Quitting smoking helps you get healthier almost immediately. After just one day, your risk of heart attack drops. Your body begins to heal within weeks. In one year, your heart attack risk drops by half. Just a few years after quitting, your risk of all smoking-related cancers declines. In five years, your risk of stroke drops to that of a non-smoker!

### After You Quit:

- **In 20 minutes:** your blood pressure returns to normal.
- **In 8 hours:** your blood carbon monoxide drops by half. Blood oxygen levels return to normal.
- **In 48 hours:** you have a lower chance of having a heart attack. All nicotine has left your body. Your sense of taste and smell return to normal.
- **In 72 hours:** your bronchial tubes relax. Your energy increases.
- **In 2 weeks:** your circulation increases and continues to improve.
- **In 3 to 9 months:** your coughing, wheezing, and breathing problems get better.
- **In 1 year:** your risk of heart attack drops by half.
- **In 5 years:** your risk of stroke returns to that of a non-smoker.
- **In 10 years:** your risk of lung cancer is half of that of a smoker.
- **In 15 years:** your risk of heart attack is the same as for a life-long non-smoker.

# You can do it!

Quitting smoking can make you feel better and even save your life! It is very important not to be hard on yourself. It is also very important to know that you can do it. No matter how many times you've tried in the past, with the right support tools and medications, you've got hope. We'll help you every step of the way. And the first step is getting the know-how to do it.



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# A special word if you do have cancer:

You are not alone. We see many people struggling with their smoking after a diagnosis of cancer. But it is important to know there's hope, even if you've tried to quit many times in the past. We have new medicines and new approaches that will help you quit smoking. Newer cancer treatments are coming every day—so it is very important not to think that it's too late. It's never too late. Better treatments to help quit smoking and treat cancer can help you live longer, feel better and quit for good.

To learn more about the services  
available at Mount Sinai, please call:

**212-523-3606**