

Mass General Cancer Center Smokefree Support Service

Health Benefits When You Quit Smoking

Quitting smoking is one of the most important things you can do to improve your health. It is never “too late” to quit smoking and to protect yourself from heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)/emphysema and asthma attacks. You may find other good changes to your body, such as better breathing, less fatigue, and fewer respiratory infections. Your old sense of smell and taste return, too!

According to the American Cancer Society, you might find some positive changes to your body and health once you quit, such as:

- **20 minutes after quitting smoking:** Your blood pressure drops to your normal level. The temperature of your hands and feet increases to normal.
- **8 hours after quitting smoking:** The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
- **24 hours after quitting smoking:** Your chance of a heart attack drops.
- **2 weeks-3 months after quitting smoking:** Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.
- **1-9 months after quitting smoking:** You will have less coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue, and shortness of breath. Cilia (tiny hair-like structures) regain normal function, increasing their ability to clean the lungs and reduce infection.
- **1 year after quitting smoking:** The chance of coronary heart disease is about half of that of a smoker's.
- **5 years after quitting smoking:** The chance of having a stroke is reduced to that of a non-smoker's.
- **10 years after quitting smoking:** The death rate from lung cancer is about half of that of a person who continues to smoke. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas drops.
- **15 years after quitting smoking:** The risk of coronary heart disease is the same as a non-smoker's.

More Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Here are other rewards that you should not overlook:

Better: Sense of smell, Sense of taste, Appetite

Lower chance of: Bone fractures, Premature aging of the skin, Loss of teeth and gum disease