



May 2019

World No Tobacco Day 2019

31 May 2019

Any day is a good day to stop using tobacco.

Tobacco, whether chewed, smoked or vaped, contains a deadly mix of chemicals, many of which can cause cancer. Using tobacco products increases the risk for serious health problems, many diseases, and death.

Why Is Tobacco So Addictive?

Blame nicotine, the main drug in tobacco, for your addiction. Did you know that more people in the U.S. are addicted to nicotine than to any other drug?

Your brain quickly adapts to nicotine and craves more and more to feel the way you used to feel after smoking just one cigarette or having a small chew.

Your brain learns to predict when you're going to use tobacco. You feel down and tired, so you think, "I need a cigarette (or a chew)," and the cycle starts again.

But it's not just about brain chemistry. Certain situations make you want to smoke or chew. Everyone's triggers are different. Yours might include the smell of cigarette smoke, seeing a carton of cigarettes or can of chew at the store, eating certain foods, or drinking your morning coffee. Sometimes just the way you feel (sad or happy) is a trigger.

One of the biggest keys to quitting is identifying the things that trigger your craving and trying to avoid them.

Health Benefits of Quitting

People who stop using tobacco greatly reduce their risk for disease and early death. There are benefits at any age. You are never too old to quit. Benefits include:

- ◆ Lowered risk for lung cancer and many other types of cancer.
- ◆ Reduced risk for heart disease, peripheral vascular disease (narrowing of the blood vessels outside your heart) and stroke.
- ◆ Reduced respiratory symptoms such as coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath.

- ◆ Reduced risk of developing some lung diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a leading cause of death in the U.S.
- ◆ Reduced risk for infertility in women. Women who stop smoking during pregnancy reduce their risk of having a low birth weight baby.

Withdrawal

Quitting tobacco is hard and may require several attempts. People often start again because of withdrawal symptoms, stress, and weight gain. Symptoms may include:

- ◆ Feeling irritable, angry, or anxious
- ◆ Coughing
- ◆ Headaches
- ◆ Having trouble thinking
- ◆ Craving tobacco products
- ◆ Feeling hungrier than usual



When withdrawal symptoms occur think about your reasons for quitting and remember that the withdrawal symptoms are only temporary. And, remind yourself that withdrawal symptoms are easier to treat than the major diseases tobacco can cause.

If you relapse and smoke again, don't lose hope. Most smokers quit 3 or more times before they are successful. Most former tobacco users quit on their own, without any help. However, there are many treatments and resources for quitting.

Resources to Help you quit

Ask your human resources department or supervisor if your company provides tobacco cessation services.

Talk to your doctor about medications that can help, both over-the-counter and prescription.

Do it for your Mom!



Mother's Day - May 12th

A man loves his sweetheart the most, his wife the best, but his mother the longest.

Irish Proverb

Skin Changes Should be Taken Seriously

With the re-emergence of longer days and outdoor fun, it's worth noting that skin care involves more than simple sunscreen. The Skin Cancer Foundation reports that skin cancer is the most common form of all cancers, but if diagnosed and treated early, it is also the easiest to cure.

According to the Foundation, people should inspect their skin for a change of any kind:

- ◆ A skin growth that increases in size or is pearly, translucent, tan, brown, black or multicolored.
- ◆ A mole or spot that changes color, increases in size or thickness, changes texture, is irregular in outline, and is bigger than a quarter inch.
- ◆ Spots or sores that continue to itch, hurt, crust, erode, or bleed, or an open sore that doesn't heal within three weeks.

Do you have any moles on your body that look like these?



Don't overlook it. Don't delay. See a physician, preferably one who specializes in diseases of the skin, if you note any of these changes.

A monthly head-to-toe self-examination is an excellent preventative measure and can take less than 10 minutes. Here are eight easy steps:

- ◆ Looking in a mirror, examine your face, especially your nose, lips, mouth and ears (front and back).
- ◆ Thoroughly inspect your scalp, using a comb or blow dryer and mirror to expose each section.
- ◆ Check your hands: palms and backs, between the fingers and under the fingernails, continuing up the wrist to examine both the front and back of your forearms.

Standing in front of a full-length mirror:

- ◆ Start at the elbows and scan all sides of your upper arms, including underarms.
- ◆ Focus on the neck, chest, and torso.

With back to a full-length mirror:

- ◆ Use a hand mirror to inspect the back of your neck, shoulders, upper back and back of the upper arms.
- ◆ Still using both mirrors, scan lower back, buttocks, and backs of both legs.

Sit down and prop a leg on a stool or chair:

- ◆ Use hand mirror to check front and sides of both legs, thigh to shin, ankles, tops of feet, between toes and under toenails, soles of feet and heels, and yes, more personal areas.



What is a Kombucha?

As kombucha rises in popularity, the fermented drink has gained its cult following - as well as its haters. Seems no one stands in the middle: you love it or hate it.

Fermented food and drinks are high on the food trend list in 2019, as people seek ways to work probiotics into their diets via their food rather than in pill form.

For those not familiar with it, kombucha is a type of fermented tea (though not an alcoholic drink). It has a tart, somewhat bitter taste that can take some getting used to, and comes in a wide variety of flavors from a wide variety of brands.

Advocates claim health benefits from gut health to reduced inflammation, improved cholesterol levels, blood sugar control, antibacterial properties, and even a reduced risk of cancer.

Looking for a new beverage that may offer health benefits? Give kombucha a try.

