

The Immediate Benefits of Quitting Cigarettes.

If you are a smoker, you are probably aware of the dangers you face by continuing to smoke. Your doctor, your friends, and family have all urged you to quit. They have talked about cancer and emphysema frequently, but you have learned to tune them out. Maybe smoking has lost its allure for you, and it's become an albatross around your neck. You may even feel the detrimental effects of smoking and figure it's too late to quit; the damage has been done. The truth is that not all damage from smoking is permanent and that if you stop before you get emphysema or COPD that you can avoid those diseases entirely. So, take heart! It isn't too late to enjoy a healthier, happier life without the negative impact of cigarettes. Let's take a look at what can happen when you quit smoking.

The first and most immediate result of quitting smoking is better breathing. According to the American Lung Association when you stop smoking the cilia (small hairs) in your lungs recover and start working again so that your breath will improve in as little as a few weeks. Your lung capacity will improve which means some of those exercises where you gasped for air like running, swimming, biking, and in-line skating will all become easier. You may cough quite a bit the first few times you exercise due to the cilia being able to do their job and expel tar and other toxins that have built up in your lungs. The coughing will become less frequent over a few months as your lungs clear, and your ability to do aerobic exercise will increase. Unfortunately, this is not true for smokers who have developed emphysema, but even smokers who have COPD will find that there is an improvement in their breathing if they quit.

According to Bay Care, within three months of quitting your body can process oxygen more efficiently and circulation will improve. Improved blood flow results in nutrients reaching muscles, including the heart, which in turn, makes them stronger. There is a snowball effect between increased oxygen levels and muscles. Oxygen makes muscles stronger, stronger muscles mean more exercise, more exercise means increased oxygen levels in your blood. In time, after you quit smoking, you will experience an increase in blood flow to vital organs due to your improved oxygen levels. Another effect that increases blood flow due to giving up cigarettes is healthier skin. Livestrong states that improved blood flow to the skin improves its ability to fight off germs with which it comes into contact. The old sallow skin tone that most smokers have is replaced with healthy color and tone, and that dead fish feel of cold skin will transform and become warm to the touch. There is also the added benefit to skin when you quit smoking; it is no longer exposed to the chemicals that cause premature aging and can give it a more youthful experience. When men quit smoking, they receive another benefit of increased circulation; they are less likely to experience erectile dysfunction. Many of the causes of erectile dysfunction related to reduced blood flow such as heart disease, clogged blood vessels, and high blood pressure; all of which can be caused by smoking. As a man's oxygen levels increase due to having quit smoking, his blood flow increases and so does the chance to have a normal, healthy erection. According to the Science Times, increased oxygen levels may also help the immune system to fight cancer cells. Researchers at the University of Pittsburg were

able to determine that an increase in oxygen levels may prevent cancer from slowing down tumor-fighting immune cells, which helps antibodies to attack cancer cells. Once you've quit smoking an improvement in your immune system will decrease the chances of your getting cancer.

An overall more attractive appearance can be a direct result from quitting smoking, as previously stated skin is a beneficiary of improved oxygen rates, looking clearer and more youthful, but there are other benefits as well. When you suck on a cigarette, there are a series of muscles around the mouth involved in the process. The more these muscles in use, the stronger they become and can cause what is known as smoker's wrinkles. When you quit smoking the muscles atrophy, and the lines will become less visible or disappear altogether, which produces a younger appearance. Another benefit of stopping smoking is that you won't smell like a dirty ashtray anymore. There is nothing more repulsive, even to a casual smoker than when someone's clothes reek of cigarettes. This detail is often overlooked by smokers whose olfactory senses are depleted by the very smoking which causes their smoky smell. When seeking a prospective mate, many people seek out non-smokers, for this reason, more often than their health and well-being. Once you quit smoking, and after a shower and your clothes have been through the laundry, you instantly smell better. Not smelling like smoke is perhaps the fastest thing that changes when you quit cigarettes. Once washed, your hair will no longer have that stale smell but smell clean and fresh like it used to be. You may have yellow stained teeth from years of smoking, which makes you less attractive and appear older. The good news is that when you quit smoking, and after a trip to the dentist, your teeth can be pearly white right away. Continuing not to smoke and regular brushing will ensure your teeth stay white and you will no longer have a mustard colored grin. You are also less likely to lose teeth to gum disease.

After you stop smoking your breath will smell better and won't be offensive while you carry on a conversation with someone near you. Cigarette smoke is a well-known irritant and may result in giving you bloodshot eyes. Even using eye-drops while smoking will not entirely get rid of the tiny veins that appear and often burst in your sclera. Once you quit smoking the red veins in your eyes will vanish in a matter of days. Quitting cigarettes also reduces your chances of getting cataracts and macular degeneration.

Among the many reasons to quit smoking is one that has nothing to do with your health. The cost of cigarettes continues to skyrocket due to federal and state taxes. According to Fair Reporters, most packs of cigarettes cost between \$6.00 and \$8.00 nationally, but it can cost more than that. In New York State a pack of cigarettes cost an average of \$12.85; that means a two pack a day smoker in pays an average cost of \$9,380.50 annually. There are also health and dental-related costs involved with smoking and such as medication and procedures. A smoker in New York could easily exceed \$10,000.00 a year in smoking-related expenses. Cigarettes have been steadily increasing in price for over twenty years, and if the trend continues, will do so for another twenty years. Because of the costs, smokers f making decisions on which expenses they can cut out to buy cigarettes. Some smokers will drive across state lines to purchase cartons of cheaper cigarettes. Driving to purchase cheaper cigarettes may seem like it would save money, but once the cost of gas along with wear and tear on the

vehicle factor in, the savings are significantly less. One aspect of giving up cigarettes to consider is an increase in free time which could be used for leisure or to work on a business venture. Once you quit smoking, it will give you a more considerable disposable income, which could be used to take a vacation, put a down payment on a car, or make a financial investment.

Maybe the most apparent benefit of quitting cigarettes is that you feel better. Many smokers who have quit have given accounts of how it changed their life, and that opined that they should have stopped sooner. With increased oxygen capacity comes increased energy and an upbeat outlook. According to Everyday Health, smoking leads to an increased risk of depression. It is possible that nicotine can interfere with neural pathways in the brain that regulate mood, which result in mood swings and depression. Although you may be cranky for a few days after you quit smoking, most people start to feel less depressed in around a month. You won't have to listen to loved ones nagging you to get rid of cigarettes, which would improve anyone's mood. It makes sense that people who quit smoking are happier than smokers when they are healthy, look better, feel better and have more money. The question is why with all the clear advantages to quitting, why would anyone continue to smoke?