



 **Quitline** 137848

**Tobacco Free Family**

## Index

1. Tobacco Story
2. What's in a cigarette?
3. Health risks from smoking
4. What is second hand smoke?
5. Please don't smoke near pregnant women and children
6. Things you and your family can do about second hand smoke
7. If you smoke there are things you can do to protect people from the dangers of second hand smoke
8. Reducing or quitting the smokes
9. Withdrawal, managing cravings and the 5 deadly Ds
10. Quitting methods
11. Quitting tips
12. Good health news about quitting
13. More good things about quitting



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## Tobacco story

Before colonisation our people used native tobacco. Big trade routes stretched around the whole country. But the right to use tobacco was strictly controlled by Elders.

When the colonisers came they introduced smoking tobacco. They gave tobacco to Aboriginal people in exchange for cultural knowledge, goods and work. Our people were given tobacco for rations and as payment for many things, and many became dependent or addicted.



Today smoking tobacco is a big problem for our people. Around 50% of them smoke, and smoking causes one in five of all Aboriginal deaths.

Exposure to smoke is very harmful for our children, and many of our children grow up in homes where people are smoking indoors.



## What's in a cigarette?

Cigarettes and rolling tobacco are made from the leaves of tobacco plants. Once the leaves are dried they are treated with many chemicals. The smoke from cigarettes contains over 5000 chemicals. Some of these chemicals are known to cause cancers. Everybody who breathes in cigarette smoke is being exposed to these chemicals.



If members of your family are exposed to cigarette smoke, either by smoking or being near smokers, they may be breathing in tar, nicotine, carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, metals, radioactive compounds and pesticides.

## Health risks from smoking

Smoking is the single biggest risk factor contributing to illness for our people. The more smoke you are exposed to the greater the risk of harm to your body.

### Smoking can cause a range of diseases and health conditions:

- Cancers – lung, throat, mouth, tongue, nose, sinus, oesophagus, pancreas, stomach, kidney, bladder, ureter, cervix and bone marrow
- Heart disease
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) like bronchitis and emphysema
- Stroke
- Peripheral vascular disease
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm
- Peptic ulcer
- Eye disease
- Low fertility (women)
- Low bone density
- Gum disease
- Respiratory diseases –shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing and worsens asthma
- Complications during and after surgery

### Smoking increases the risk of:

- Liver and bowel cancer
- Crohn's disease (chronic bowel disease)
- Dementia
- Type II diabetes
- Erectile dysfunction
- Complications with pregnancy
- Increased chance of catching viral and bacterial infections
- Autoimmune disease
- Premature wrinkles



## What is second hand smoke?

Second hand smoke is the smoke which people breathe out, and smoke which comes off the burning end of the cigarette.



There was a time when people smoked just about anywhere. But now we know that second hand smoke from cigarettes can be even more harmful.

This is sometimes called passive smoking. The smoke is called second hand smoke or environmental tobacco smoke or side-stream smoke. It contains many toxic chemicals which were filtered out by the cigarette filter. This smoke is very harmful.



## Please don't smoke near pregnant women or children



If you smoke near a pregnant woman it will affect her and her baby.

If you smoke near children they will be affected by the smoke.

Second hand smoke increases the risk of the child developing asthma, middle ear disease, and causes poor lung development, chest and breathing illnesses and behavioural problems.

The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is doubled in children exposed to second hand smoke.

Children who live with smokers are more likely to start smoking.



## Things you and your family can do about second hand smoke

- Share what you know about the dangerous effects of second hand smoke
- Make a family plan and set some rules about smoking
- Don't smoke in the house or the car
- Put up signs so that everyone knows
- Make a place outside, away from air conditioners, doors and windows, where people can go for a smoke
- Tell kids to keep away from people who are smoking and don't let them hang around a smoking area



## If you smoke there are things you can do to protect people from the dangers of second hand smoke

If you choose to smoke please respect your family, friends and community members who do not smoke. Smoke from your cigarettes can make them really sick.

Take extra care around old people, people with health problems, pregnant women, and especially our children. Be mindful not to smoke around them.

Don't smoke in the car or in the house. Smoke in the area your family has set up for smokers.

If you are visiting – ask where you can smoke. People will like you showing respect for their family.



Remember it is up to you, because some people may feel too shame to ask you not to smoke near them.

## Reducing or quitting the smokes

Giving up smokes can be hard for some people. This is because the nicotine in smokes is a very addictive substance, and your smoking may be a strong habit.



There are lots of reasons why people smoke. Maybe you smoke to help you cope, help you relax, get an energy lift, get a break, or be part of a group.



And you may wonder how you would manage things without a smoke.



## Withdrawal

When you quit smoking you may have some withdrawal symptoms as your body begins to repair and return to normal. You may experience some of these:

- Coughing
- Cravings
- Irritable and mood swings
- Difficulty concentrating
- Tingles in hands and feet
- Restlessness
- Anxious for no reason
- Upset sleep
- Upset stomach
- Headaches
- Feeling hungry

These symptoms will disappear. It may take 10-30 days.



## Managing cravings

Cravings only last a few minutes, and reduce over time. When you have a craving it helps to remember it will pass. The 5 Ds can be a useful way to manage a craving.

## The 5 Deadly Ds

- Delay
- Deep breathe
- Drink water
- Do something else
- Dial Quitline 13 7848



## Quitting methods

It may take a few attempts to find what works for you. This is a normal part of quitting. Keep trying and you will get there.

### Going cold turkey

This means giving up the smokes suddenly. This works for many people, and you can still get support or use quit medications to help you get through.

### Gradual approach

This means you cut down the number of smokes you have each day, until you no longer smoke. Or you delay the time of your first cigarette, making it later and later until you no longer smoke. If you take this approach it helps to aim to be smoke free within two weeks.

### Quit medications

Medications are available which can reduce withdrawal symptoms. These are nicotine replacement products (NRT) and some prescription medications. Ask your doctor or health care worker if these would be OK for you.



## Quitting Tips

- Make a plan and stick to it
- See if anyone else in the family wants to quit with you
- Find people who can support you
- Change old habits
- Ask people who have quit how they did it
- Join a group – it can make things easier
- Know what triggers you to smoke
- Keep track of how much money you are saving
- Find other things to do with your hands
- Remember it can take several attempts to quit
- Don't be hard on yourself if you slip up – it's a chance to learn to do things differently
- Phone a friend or call Quitline 13 7848



## Good health news about quitting

### Within

**8 hours** Excess carbon monoxide is out of your blood

**5 days** Most nicotine is out of your body

**1 week** Your senses of taste and smell get better

**4 weeks** Your blood flow is improving

**3 months** Your lungs are working better

**1 year** Your risk of heart disease has halved

**5 years** Your risk of stroke has greatly reduced



## More good things about quitting

- Save money
- Be a good role model for kids and community
- Live longer
- Be there to pass on culture and knowledge
- Make the family proud
- Feel fitter and healthier
- Have more energy
- Have more control over your life
- Know what you're doing helps keep your kids safe and healthy
- Have more time to do the things you really enjoy
- Feel good about yourself because you have beaten the smokes



If you are thinking about quitting or cutting down on smokes, or would like to make your home smoke free there are lots of people who could help you with this. You could talk to your doctor, midwife, nurse, Aboriginal Health Worker, Healthy Lifestyle Worker, or chemist. Or you could call Quitline and speak to a professional counsellor. Quitline offers a confidential telephone service and is available seven days a week.



**Local contact**



**Quitline® 137848**



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