



Common Smoking Myths...

Don't let one of these smoking untruths keep you from attempting to quit smoking. Any way you look at it, you will have a greater chance at a longer and healthier life - if you quit smoking.

	The Myth	The Reality
	<p>The damage is already done, so I might as well keep smoking.</p>	<p>False. No matter how old you are or how long you have smoked, quitting can help you improve your health and possibly live longer. It is true that the longer you smoke cigarettes, the greater your risk for harmful effects on your health. But if you stop at any age, your health will begin to improve sooner that you might think. How Soon Do You Benefit From Smoking Cessation - within 20 minutes. While you might have to wait 15 years to lower your risk of a heart attack to that of a non-smoker, it can be done if you stop smoking. And in the meantime, you will start to feel better and breathe easier within days or weeks. So, to prevent further damage, quit smoking today!</p>
	<p>Nicotine - replacement products are just as unhealthful as cigarettes.</p>	<p>False. Nicotine-replacement products used to help you quit smoking have been shown to be safe. They contain only nicotine, and even when used "as needed" throughout the day, usually provide smaller amounts than cigarettes. More importantly, they do not contain the thousands of other chemicals that are in cigarettes, many of which are known to cause cancer. Choosing to use nicotine-replacement products, even in the long-term, to help you quit smoking is much safer than continuing to smoke.</p>
	<p>My smoking (second-hand smoke) doesn't affect my family's health.</p>	<p>False. If you don't do it for yourself, quit for your family's health. Every year, 50,000 people die of exposure to second-hand smoke, according to the American Lung Association. Second-hand smoke contains hundreds of chemicals known to cause cancer. It can also raise a non-smoker's risk of a heart attack. And according to the Surgeon General's Report, on second-hand smoke in 2006, there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke. So, until you are ready to quit, be courteous and do not smoke around non-smokers.</p>



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	Low-tar, "mild," "light, or ultra-light" or clove cigarettes are healthier than regular cigarettes.	<p>False. The filters in low-tar cigarettes (also sometimes called "mild" or "light" or "ultra-light" cigarettes) often include vent holes, which are meant to draw in air with each puff to dilute the harmful smoke inhaled. but smokers often end up covering these holes with their fingers or lips. Plus research has shown that smokers who use a reduced-tar cigarette compensate by taking longer puffs, more frequent puffs, or smoking more cigarettes per day. Drawing more deeply with each breath may allow even more dangerous chemicals into the lungs than regular cigarettes do.</p> <p>Clove cigarettes (and other flavored cigarettes except for menthol) were banned in the U.S. by the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, H.R. 1256, in 2009. This legislation also prohibits the use of the marketing strategies that misrepresent cigarette products as lower-risk alternatives, including the words "light" or "ultra-light."</p> <p>The bottom line is that no cigarette is healthier than another. They are all harmful and quitting is the only way to avoid the dangers.</p>
	Smokeless tobacco is healthier than cigarettes.	<p>False. Smokeless tobacco is still tobacco, which provides nicotine along with other substances that are known to cause cancer. While you are not inhaling it into your lungs, it is still being absorbed through the lining of your mouth and circulating through your bloodstream to all parts of your body. And although there is no second-hand smoke to endanger people around you, spitting the excessive saliva produced from smokeless tobacco can be offensive to others. Quitting all tobacco products is the best choice for your health.</p>



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	<p>Cutting back is good enough for my health; I only smoke occasionally in social situations.</p>	<p>False. Studies have shown that smokers who have cut back on cigarettes draw more deeply and smoke more of each cigarette. The end result is that they can get the same amount of toxic smoke as before. So, your health risks wouldn't begin to decrease until you quit smoking. Further, social situations and/or places may be triggers that make you want to smoke more. So, it's possible that the more you interact socially, the more likely you may be to increase the number of cigarettes you smoke regularly. Again, although it may take many tries, quitting smoking is the only way to improve your health.</p>
	<p>Quitting would make me gain weight, which would be just as unhealthy as cigarette smoking.</p>	<p>False. It is true some people gain weight when quitting cigarettes in part because their appetite is no longer suppressed. It may also be that some people are eating more frequently to keep their hands and mouth busy, replacing the behavior of smoking. Either way, most people gain about 10 to 15 pounds on average - an amount that does not raise health risks nearly as much as smoking cigarettes does. Even if you might gain weight when you stop smoking, quitting is still the best behavior modification you can make to lower your heart health risk the most. While quitting, following a heart-healthy nutrition plan and getting plenty of physical activity will help you prevent weight gain.</p>