



# Benefits of quitting smoking

Smoking remains a leading cause of death and disability in NSW, accounting for around 5,300 deaths and 46,000 hospitalisations each year. Half of all long-term smokers will die prematurely because they smoked.

The best thing smokers can do for their health is to quit smoking. It doesn't matter whether you are male or female, young or old or how long you have been

smoking, quitting will improve your health. Even if you already have a smoking-related problem like heart or lung disease, you still benefit from quitting.

**There are many benefits to quitting and some occur within hours and days.**

Time since quitting	How your health benefits
20 minutes	Your heart rate decreases
12-24 hours	The level of carbon monoxide in your expired air has decreased dramatically
2-12 weeks	Your risk of heart attack begins to reduce Your lung function improves making exercise easier
1-9 months	Coughing and shortness of breath decrease
1 year	Your risk of coronary heart disease is halved
5 years	Your risk of mouth, throat and oesophageal cancer and stroke decreases
10 years	Your risk of lung cancer is halved and your risk of bladder, kidney and pancreatic cancer decreases
15 years	Your risk of coronary heart disease and risk of death decrease to about the same as someone who has never smoked

## Health benefits of quitting

- If you quit before age 35 your life expectancy is similar to someone who has never smoked.
- If you quit before age 50 you halve your risk of dying before you turn 65.
- Quitting at any age increases life expectancy and improves quality of life.
- Quitting smoking reduces your risk of:
  - cancer of the lung, throat, mouth, lips, gums, kidney and bladder
  - heart disease and stroke
  - emphysema and other lung diseases
  - gangrene and other circulatory diseases
  - blindness from macular degeneration and cataracts
  - brittle bones that break easily
  - impotence, infertility and miscarriages
  - sickly and small babies

Your appearance also benefits from quitting smoking. It reduces the risk of:

- wrinkles and looking older faster
- yellow teeth and bad breath

Quitting smoking is also good for the health of your children. A smoke-free environment for your children lowers their risk of:

- sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS or cot death)
- ear infections
- asthma and allergies
- bronchitis and other lung problems
- becoming smokers themselves.

Some other benefits of quitting:

- Saving money. If you spend \$100 a week on cigarettes then you will save more than \$5,000 for each year you don't smoke.
- Your sense of taste and smell will improve.
- You will have more energy and a better quality of life.
- Cigarettes will no longer control your life.

**Remember, it's never too late to quit smoking. The sooner you quit the better.**

**For help with quitting smoking contact the Quitline 13 7848 (13 QUIT) or speak with your health professional.**

Visit the websites: [www.icanquit.com.au](http://www.icanquit.com.au) and [www.quitnow.gov.au](http://www.quitnow.gov.au)