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SMOKING CESSATION

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INTRODUCTION

Approximately 18.2% of South Africans are tobacco smokers. That means that there are more than 7 million smokers over the age of 15. Together they smoke more than 27 billion cigarettes per year – an average of 3771 cigarettes per smoker per year.(1)

Why Quit Tobacco Smoking?

Smoking tobacco harms every organ in the body. It causes 8–10% of all adult deaths in South Africa.

South Africans suffering from tuberculosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), lung cancer, digestive cancers and ischaemic heart disease are more likely to die if they smoke. If smokers had the same death rate as non-smokers, 58% of lung cancer deaths, 37% of COPD deaths, 20% of tuberculosis deaths and 23% of vascular deaths would be avoided.(1)

HOW MUCH SMOKING IS TOO MUCH?

There is no safe level of tobacco use.

Even patients who smoke as few as 5 cigarettes per day can have coronary artery disease.



WHAT ABOUT VAPING AND HOOKAH?

Hookah smoking is associated with significant health risks including cancer, heart disease, dental disease, and lung disease.

There is no long-term research on the health effects of vaping because it is a relatively new product.

They are thought to be less harmful than tobacco smoking but they are still not safe.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF QUITTING SMOKING

- IMPROVES** health and **INCREASES** life expectancy
- LOWERS** risk of 12 types of cancer
- LOWERS** risk of cardiovascular diseases
- LOWERS** risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- LOWERS** risk of some poor reproductive health outcomes
- BENEFITS** people who have already been diagnosed with coronary heart disease or COPD
- BENEFITS** people at any age - even people who have smoked for years or have smoked heavily will benefit from quitting

[http://cdc.gov/tobacco\(2\)](http://cdc.gov/tobacco(2))

10 DANGERS associated with Vaping

- The nicotine contained in e-cigarettes is addictive.
- Vaping affects the developing brain in the following ways: reduced impulse control, memory and mood disorders.
- Leads to lung disease caused by the chemical Diacetyl also called popcorn lung.
- Irritates mouth and airways.
- Causes vomiting, headaches and nausea.
- Exposure to Formaldehyde is 15 times higher than smoking cigarettes.
- Raises your blood pressure and spikes adrenaline which increase risk of heart attack.
- Increased risk of cancer due to toxic chemicals of nickel, tin, benzene and lead.
- Damages reproductive health.
- Causes respiratory problems like asthma.

WHAT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP ME QUIT SMOKING?

Smokers are addicted to the nicotine contained in tobacco products.

Quitting is difficult because people experience withdrawal affects.

There are several different pharmacological treatments that have been proven to help people quit smoking. They all work better if you are part of a support group.

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) helps to prevent cravings from nicotine withdrawal.

It can be purchased at pharmacies and some shops. It is available as a patch, chewing gum, tablets, and nasal and mouth spray. You may combine more than one form of NRT.

It works by providing you with a low level of nicotine without the tar, carbon monoxide and other toxins contained in tobacco smoke. It is best to consult your doctor before using them.

Pharmacological therapies include varenicline (Champix) and bupropion (Zyban). These need to be prescribed by your doctor.

They work by blocking the rewarding effects of nicotine and by decreasing withdrawal effects.

Vaping is not as harmful as tobacco products and may be used to assist with quitting.

REFERENCES

1. Sitas F, Urban M. Tobacco attributable deaths in South Africa. *Tob Control*. 2004; 13:396–399. doi: 10.1136/tc.2004.007682
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Smoking and tobacco use. <http://cdc.gov/tobacco>. (accessed 22 May 2022).