

Benefits of Being Smoke-Free

When you smoke or breathe in second-hand smoke, you are breathing in more than 7,000 toxic chemicals. About 70 of them can cause cancer, according to the U.S. Surgeon General's Report (2014).

For every minute you are not smoking or breathing in second-hand smoke, your body tries to heal from SOME of the damage.* It is never too late to stop.

If you stopped smoking for:	What happens?
20 minutes	Your blood pressure drops to the same level as it was before your last cigarette.
8 hours	The carbon monoxide level in your blood goes down to normal. (Carbon monoxide is a toxic gas. This is the same gas that comes out of the back of a car.)
24 hours	Your risk of having a heart attack starts to go down.
2 weeks – 3 months	You can breathe easier because the airways in your lungs relax, and you can get more air into your lungs.
1 – 9 months	You cough less. Your lungs work better.
1 year	Your risk of a heart attack goes down by half compared to someone who smokes.
5 years	Your risk of having a stroke is the same as someone who does not smoke.
10 years	Your chance of dying is lower for these cancers: lung, mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney and/or pancreas.
15 years	Your risk of dying from a heart attack is the same as someone who does not smoke.

*** When you stop smoking, have your doctor review your medications. Some medications may need to be adjusted.**



Adapted from Health Benefits of Quitting (2016)
Government of Canada

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