

NEA HEALTH TALK



Five Benefits of Quitting Smoking You May Not Have Known

Chances are you know that smoking is bad for your health. It increases your risks of cancer; negatively impacts your appearance by turning your teeth yellow and causing wrinkled skin; permeates your clothing, home, and car with its smell; and can cause lung diseases like emphysema. Quitting smoking can be difficult, but there are so many benefits that make it worth the struggle. We've compiled five additional benefits of quitting smoking that you may not have thought of before.

The Taste of Food Improves

Many people notice that their sense of taste had been lessened when they were smoking. In addition, smoking can impact your sense of smell, which has a big impact on how food

tastes. When you quit, your taste buds will start working better in as little as several days. Overall, your mouth will feel cleaner, and flavors of food will taste more robust.

Reduced Risk of Macular Degeneration

Did you know that people who smoke are four times more likely to go blind due to macular degeneration compared to non-smokers? Macular degeneration is a progressive loss of vision that is often related to age.

Many people who suffer from it find themselves struggling to read or drive because the part of the retina that allows them to see straight ahead stops functioning. Research has shown that 20 to 25% of age-related macular degeneration cases are a result of smoking.

Less Acid Reflux

The longer you have been a smoker, the bigger risk you have of suffering from acid reflux. Heavy smoking, especially over a long period of time, is shown to greatly increase the risk for acid reflux. Burning, chronic pain in the chest, dry coughing, indigestion, regurgitation, vomiting, nausea, and a bitter or sour taste are just a few of the symptoms of acid reflux, all of which can be extremely uncomfortable.

Better Use of Time

People who smoke can find themselves craving a cigarette at any point throughout the day. Whether you have to step away from your computer at work, interrupt a conversation at a family gathering, or miss out on special moments at a party, smoke breaks can

impact how you operate throughout the day. Without having to plan for these, you can enjoy the moment without stealing away for a cigarette. Plus, many public places have made smoking inside illegal, so it also keeps you from having to go outside to smoke.

Less Chance of Snoring

Snoring can be an annoying habit for yourself and your partner. It has been shown that smoking, or even living with someone who smokes, can cause you to snore during your sleep. More frequent smoking can lead to habitual snoring, and people who are exposed to secondhand smoke are also more likely to snore. Quitting smoking can lead to a better night's sleep for you and your family.