

# Smoking

## Can kill you

Most people know that smoking causes cancer, heart disease, lung disease and that it can shorten your life, too.

But people who smoke also get bad breath, yellow fingers, rotting teeth, smelly clothes and hair, and they develop wrinkles earlier. They get a 'smoker's cough' and aren't as fit as non-smokers.

Another reason to avoid cigarettes is the amount they cost. Just think what you could buy with that money instead. If you smoke 20 cigarettes a day for one year it will cost you over £2,500.00.

Smoking can harm other people who breathe in your smoke. It also hurts your unborn baby if you are pregnant.

If you smoke you are likely to use other drugs as well. The nicotine in tobacco is addictive which means it's hard to give up most young people who smoke carry on throughout adulthood.

The earlier that you decide to quit the better for your health it will be.

## Health effects

- The short term effects include reduced lung capacity and addiction to nicotine. Smoking increases the risk of developing lung cancer.
- Long-term health consequences of youth smoking are reinforced by the fact that most young people who smoke regularly continue to smoke throughout adulthood.
- Smoking hurts young people's physical fitness in terms of both performance and endurance - even among young people trained in competitive running.

## The Law

- You must be 18 years old to legally buy cigarettes.
- It is against the law to smoke in enclosed public places.

## Quitting

There are lots of ways to quit some people just stop by themselves.

If you try to give up but start smoking again, keep trying. Many people quit several times before they give up for good. Just 20 minutes after your last cigarette your body will start getting healthier. After 72 hours you'll find it easier to breathe. It takes 15 years for your risk of serious illness to fall back to normal.

## E-cigarettes

These produce nicotine vapour in different flavours. They are not as harmful to health as cigarettes but they are addictive and the chargers have caused fires. Sisha produces tobacco smoke and is as harmful as smoking.

## Who can help?

- School Nurse
- GP
- Parent/carer

## Contacts

- St Helens Smokefree Service 01744 586247 or text **Quit** to 61825
- [www.readytostopsmoking.co.uk](http://www.readytostopsmoking.co.uk)
- [www.smokefree.nhs.uk](http://www.smokefree.nhs.uk)