

# The Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

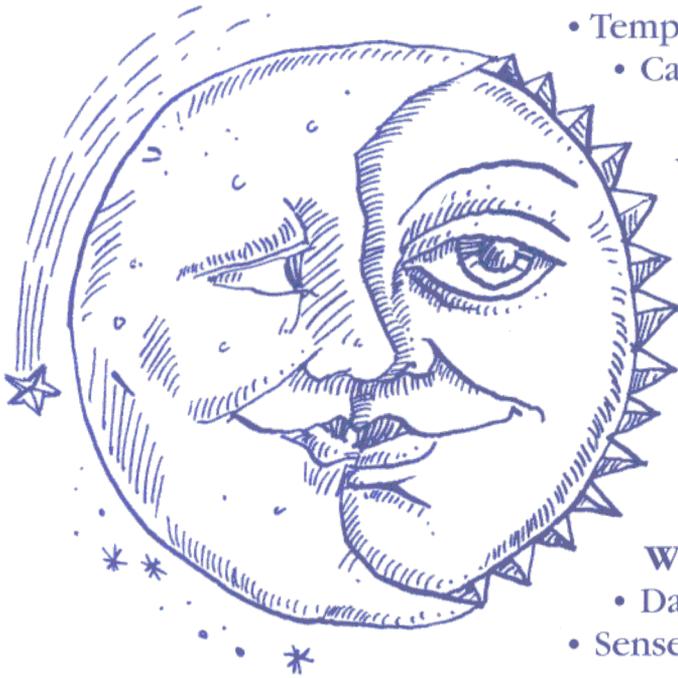


California  
Smokers'  
Helpline

1-800-NO-BUTTS

## Within 20 minutes:

- Blood pressure drops to normal.
- Pulse slows to normal.
- Temperature of hands and feet increases to normal.
- Cardiovascular damage begins to subside.



## Within 8 hours:

- Carbon monoxide level in blood decreases.
- Oxygen level in blood increases to normal.

## Within 24 hours:

- Chance of heart attack decreases.

## Within 48 hours:

- Damaged nerve endings start to re-grow.
- Sense of smell and taste begin to improve.

## Within 72 hours:

- Nicotine is all out of the body.
- Bronchial tubes relax, making breathing easier.

## Within a year...

### 2 weeks to 3 months:

- Blood circulation improves throughout the body.
- Exercise becomes easier.
- Lung function increases by 30%.

### 1 to 9 months:

- Coughing, shortness of breath, and sinus congestion all decrease.
- Cilia re-grow in lungs—increasing the lungs' ability to clean themselves and reduce frequency of infections.
- Your body's overall energy level increases.

### 1 year:

- Risk of heart disease is reduced by half.

## For the rest of your life...

### 5 years:

- Risk of stroke decreases to the level of non-smokers.

### 10 years:

- Risk of lung cancer is reduced by half.
- Precancerous cells in the body are replaced by healthy cells.
- Incidence of other cancers (mouth, larynx, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas) all decrease.

### 15 years:

- Overall risk of death nearly returns to the level of someone who never smoked.
- Risks of heart disease and lung cancer return to levels of a non-smoker.

Health Benefits Source: American Cancer Society, 1999