

Smoking

know the facts



Smoking causes
90%
of all lung cancer



Every day more than 6 people die in Northern Ireland from smoking-related illnesses



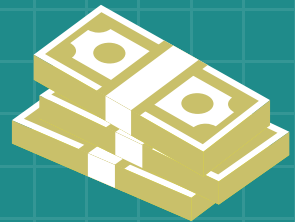
Babies exposed to second-hand smoke are
3 times
more likely to die from cot death



Smoking increases the risk of blindness



Quitting smoking for
1 year
reduces the risk of a heart attack to about half that of a smoker



Quit smoking for 10 years and you will have saved

£34,000

(based on a 20-per-day smoker)

DID YOU KNOW?

In Northern Ireland, 2,300 people die each year from smoking-related illness – more than six people per day.



Why stop?

- Smoking is the main cause of illness and early death in Northern Ireland. It causes many types of cancer (including cervical cancer) and can also lead to leukaemia, heart disease, stroke, serious breathing conditions and weak bones.
- A smoker's eyesight is more likely to get worse as they get older and sometimes there is no treatment for this. In severe cases, this can mean the smoker will eventually go blind.
- If a woman smokes during her pregnancy:
 - there is more chance of miscarriage;
 - there is more chance of the baby being born with a low birth weight, which can cause death or lead to a range of health and behavioural problems as the child develops.

Most smokers in Northern Ireland want to stop, but are waiting for the right time. The longer you keep smoking, the more damage you're doing to your health.

"I haven't got the willpower to stop smoking."

Smoking is addictive because of the nicotine in cigarettes, which is why it's difficult to quit. However, there are many nicotine replacement therapies (NRTs) available. These can double your chances of quitting by helping you beat the craving for a cigarette.





“Smoking helps me cope with stress.”

Smoking boosts your nicotine level and this makes you feel less stressed for a short period of time. However, when your nicotine level falls, you become edgy because of the withdrawal effect. Nicotine only seems to make you feel calm because you are addicted to it.

“I’ve been smoking for 20 years, the damage is already done.”



It’s never too late to stop smoking, although the earlier you stop the better. As soon as you stop, the risk of serious diseases starts to decrease.

Save money and feel better

The cost of smoking is very high. Here are a few examples of the health and financial benefits if you quit.

Time since quitting	Health benefits	Money saved*
20 minutes	Your heart rate drops	47p
8 hours	Nicotine and carbon monoxide levels in your blood reduce by half	£3.13
24 hours	Carbon monoxide and nicotine are cleared from your body	£9.40
48 hours	Your ability to taste and smell is improved	£18.80
2-12 weeks	Circulation improves and your lung function increases	£131– £789
1 year	Your risk of having a heart attack falls to half that of a smoker	£3,431
5 years	Stroke risk is reduced to that of a non-smoker, in most cases	£17,155
10 years	Your risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a smoker	£34,310
15 years	Your risk of having a heart attack falls to that of a non-smoker	£51,465

* Based on a 20-per-day smoker at an average price of £9.40 for 20 cigarettes.

Second-hand smoke

Most second-hand smoke, around 80%, is invisible.

Even if you don't smoke, breathing in other people's cigarette smoke can damage your health. Breathing in this second-hand smoke is called passive smoking.

The smoke that's given off by the burning tip of a cigarette is actually much more toxic than the smoke inhaled (through the filter) by the smoker. The air in a room where people are smoking contains around **4,000** chemicals, and at least 60 of them are known or suspected to cause cancer.

Breathing in second-hand smoke can have short-term effects, such as hurting your eyes, or giving you a sore throat or cough.



80%
of second-hand
smoke is
invisible
and it increases the
risk of lung cancer by 24%

However, the long-term effects of second-hand smoke are much more dangerous. Regular passive smoking can increase your risk of:

- lung cancer by 24%;
- heart disease by at least 25%.

The dangers to children and babies




Children are more at risk from second-hand smoke because of their smaller lungs and the fact that their bodies are still developing.

The Royal College of Physicians has estimated that the following health problems are caused every year in the UK by exposing children to second-hand smoke:

- 40 sudden infant deaths (cot deaths);
- 200 cases of meningitis;
- more than 20,000 airway or lung infections;
- at least 22,000 new cases of wheezing and asthma;
- 120,000 cases of middle ear disease.

Help and support available

Smokers who want to quit can access a range of support services in Northern Ireland:

- Want2stop website: **www.want2stop.info** offers advice and information on all the help available. Users can also set up their own quit plan.
- Want2stop Facebook page. 
- Free SMS text service (text 'Quit' to 70004).
- Quit Kit, which you can order free of charge through the Want2stop website.
- More than 650 free stop smoking services are available across Northern Ireland. Most of these services provide licensed NRT and are run by specially trained staff who can advise you on the best way to stop smoking. Services are offered in many GP practices, community pharmacies, Health and Social Care Trust premises, community and voluntary organisations. They can also be set up in workplaces. For more information on specialist services near you, visit www.want2stop.info and click on 'Stop smoking services'.

Licensed nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)

There are many different licensed NRT products available, either on prescription or over the counter from your pharmacist. The range includes:

- patches;
- gum;
- inhalators;
- mouth spray;
- nasal spray;
- tablets;
- lozenges;
- oral strips.

Your GP, community pharmacist or stop smoking service can advise on which one is best for you. If you are pregnant, talk to your GP or midwife about licensed NRT. A short course of licensed NRT is safer for you and your baby than continuing to smoke.

Other medications

Varenicline (brand name Champix®) and bupropion (brand name Zyban®) can also help you quit smoking by reducing the cravings for a cigarette. Visit **www.want2stop.info** to find out more, or speak to your pharmacist or GP, who can offer you advice.

E-cigarettes

At this point, for smokers, e-cigarettes appear to be a safer option than smoking, but they are not regulated or licensed and the short and long-term effects of using e-cigarettes are not yet known. They are therefore not as safe as well-established, licensed NRT products like nicotine patches and gum, which are tightly controlled for quality and safety. While the Public Health Agency (PHA) considers e-cigarettes with caution at this time, if **you choose** to use e-cigarettes as a means of stopping smoking, we would advise that you seek the support of a stop smoking service, as this will increase your chances of quitting for good – details of the 650+ free local services and other information can be found at www.want2stop.info

The safest and most effective way to stop is with the support of a stop smoking service who can provide regulated, licensed nicotine replacement therapy.

Remember, if you stop smoking for 28 days or more, you're five times more likely to stop for good.

For advice and support or to find your local stop smoking service, visit **www.want2stop.info** or text 'Quit' to 70004.

You can also follow **Want2stop** on Facebook



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