



IT'S NOT JUST IMPOTENCE!

Smoking Can Wreck and Prematurely Age Your Body Before It Kills You

The fact that tobacco use increases the risk of male impotence has been getting a lot of attention lately. Oddly enough, many smokers and smokeless tobacco users who ignore the enormous risks they face of suffering and dying from heart disease, cancer, and other fatal tobacco-related illnesses find their increased risk of reduced sexual function much more disturbing. In fact, before dying from tobacco use, smokers and other tobacco users (including those exposed to secondhand smoke) face significantly higher risks of all sorts of other irritating or debilitating physical and medical problems. The enormous variety of harm caused by tobacco use makes providing a comprehensive list impossible, but here are some of the highlights.

- Most people have heard about “smoker’s wrinkles” or the increased “crow’s feet” around smokers’ eyes; but few realize that smoking has also been associated with prematurely gray hair and even hair loss.¹
- Chronic coughing, increased phlegm, emphysema and bronchitis have been well-established products of smoking for decades; and smokers are also more susceptible to influenza and more likely to experience severe symptoms when they get the flu.²
- Smoking causes bad breath and makes smokers’ homes and clothes stink; and, perhaps fortunately for smokers, it also reduces their sense of smell.³
- Besides weakening smokers’ noses, cigarette smoking (and exposure to secondhand smoke) is associated with hearing loss and vision problems, including cataracts and even blindness.⁴
- Beyond smoke- or nicotine-stained teeth, smokers are also more likely to suffer from periodontal disease and to have more serious periodontal disease, including tooth loss.⁵
- Cigarette smoking increases both the risk and the severity of rheumatoid arthritis.⁶
- Smoking can cause the early onset of menopause among women, incontinence, and reduced fertility; and it may also reduce fertility among men.⁷
- Cigarette smoking is a risk factor for osteoporosis, and could become a more powerful factor among today’s youth who have begun smoking at earlier ages.⁸
- If a smoker breaks a bone or needs any kind of surgery, his or her smoking can interfere with the healing process.⁹
- Early evidence suggested that nicotine might actually help some people suffering from Alzheimer’s disease, but more recent evidence shows that smoking actually doubles a person’s risk of dementia and Alzheimer’s.¹⁰
- Smoking and nicotine have also been associated with increased headache activity.¹¹
- While many smokers believe that smoking relieves stress, it is actually a major cause. Smoking only appears to reduce stress because it lessens the irritability and tension caused by the underlying nicotine addiction.¹²

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, December 8, 1999

More information on the health harms of tobacco use is available at
http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts_issues/fact_sheets/toll/products/.

¹ Mosley, JG & Gibbs, AC, "Premature Gray Hair and Hair Loss Among Smokers: A New Opportunity for Health Education," *British Medical Journal* 313(7072):1616, December 21-28, 1996.

² Kark, JD, et al., "Cigarette Smoking as a Risk Factor For Epidemic a(h1n1) Influenza in Young Men," *New England Journal of Medicine* 307(17):1042-46, October 21, 1982; Kark, JD & Lebiush, M, "Smoking and Epidemic Influenza-Like Illness in Female Military Recruits: A Brief Survey," *American Journal of Public Health* 71(5):530-32, May 1981.

³ Fiser, A, "Smell Perception in Smokers," *Medicinski Pregled* 43(1-2):48-49, 1990 [in Serbo-Croatian]; Moritz, RP, & Winkler, U, "Effect of Smoking on Sense of Smell and Taste," *Zeitschrift Fur Die Gesamte Hygiene Und Ihre Grenzgebiet* 33(12):660-61, December 1987 [in German].

⁴ For hearing loss, see, e.g., Noorhassim, I & Rampal, KG, "Multiplicative Effect of Smoking and Age on Hearing Impairment," *American Journal of Otolaryngology* 19(4):240-43, July-August 1998; Cruickshanks, KJ, et al., "Cigarette Smoking and Hearing Loss: The Epidemiology of Hearing Loss Study," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 279(21):1715-19, June 3, 1998. For eye problems, see, e.g., Klein, R, et al., "Relation of Smoking to the Incidence of Age-Related Maculopathy: The Beaver Dam Eye Study," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 147(2): 103-10, January 15, 1998; Cumming, RG & Mitchell, P, "Alcohol, Smoking, and Cataracts," *Archives of Ophthalmology* 115(10):1296-303, October 1997; Sibony, PA, et al., "The Effects of Tobacco Smoking on Smooth Pursuit Eye Movements," *Annals of Neurology* 23(3):238-41, March 1988;

⁵ See, e.g., Tonetti, MS, "Cigarette Smoking and Periodontal Disease: Etiology and Management of Disease," *Annals of Periodontology*, 3(1):88-101, July 1998; Burgan, SW, "The Role of Tobacco Use in Periodontal Diseases: A Literature Review," *General Dentistry* 45(5):449-60, September-October, 1997; Krall, EA, "Smoking, Smoking Cessation, and Tooth Loss," *Journal of Dental Research* 76(10):1653-59, October 1997.

⁶ See, e.g., Saag, KG, et al., "Cigarette Smoking and Rheumatoid Arthritis Severity," *Annals of Rheumatic Diseases* 56(8):463-69, August 1997; Silman, AJ, et al., "Cigarette Smoking Increases the Risk of Rheumatoid Arthritis: Results From a Nationwide Study of Disease-discordant Twins," *Arthritis and Rheumatism* 39(5):732-35, May 1996.

⁷ On early menopause, see, e.g., Cramer, DW, et al., "Cross-sectional and Case-controlled Analyses of the Association Between Smoking and Early Menopause," *Maturitas* 22(2):79-87, September 1995. On incontinence, see, e.g., Tampakoudis, P, et al., "Cigarette Smoking and Urinary Incontinence in Women – A New Calculative Method of Estimating the Exposure to Smoke," *European Journal of Gynecology and Reproductive Biology* 63(1):27-30, November 1995. On reduced female fertility, see, e.g., Van Voorhis, BJ, et al., "The Effects of Smoking on Ovarian Function and Fertility During Assisted Reproduction Cycles," *Obstetric Gynecology* 88(5):785-91, November 1996. On reduced male infertility see, e.g., Close, CE, et al., "Cigarettes, Alcohol, and Marijuana are Related to Pyospermia in Infertile Men," *Journal of Urology* 144(4):900-03, October 1990; Moskova, P & Popov, I, "Sperm Quality in Smokers and Nonsmokers Among Infertile Families," *Akusherstvo I Ginekologija*, 32(1):28-30, 1993 [in Bulgarian].

⁸ Daniell, HW, "Osteoporosis of the Slender Smoker. Vertebral Compression Fractures and Loss of Metacarpal Cortex in Relation to Post meopausal Cigarette Smoking and Lack of Obesity," *Archives of Internal Medicine* 136(3):298-304, March 1976; Ill, PO & Alexandre, C, "Tobacco as Risk Factor of Osteoporosis. Myth or Reality," *Revue Du Rhumatisme Edition Francaise*, 60(4):280-86, April 1993.

⁹ Raikin, SM, et al., "Effect of Nicotine on the Rate and Strength of Long Bone Fracture Healing," *Clinical Orthopaedics and Related Research*, 353:231-37, August 1998; Lovich, SF & Arnold, PG, "The Effect of Smoking on Muscle Transposition," *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* 93(4):825-28, April 1994.

¹⁰ Ott, A, et al., "Smoking and Risk of Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease in a Population-based Cohort Study: The Rotterdam Study," *Lancet* 351(9119):1840-43, June 20, 1998.

¹¹ Payne, TJ, et al., "The Impact of Cigarette Smoking on Headache Activity in Headache Patients," *Headache* 31(5):329-32, May 1991.

¹² Parrott, AC, "Does Cigarette Smoking Cause Stress?," *American Psychologist* 54(10):817-20, October 1999.