

How smoking affects your body



Mouth and throat

Smoking causes problems like bad breath and stained teeth. It can also cause gum disease and affect your sense of taste. The most serious damage smoking can cause here is an increased risk of cancer in your lips, tongue, throat, voice box and oesophagus (gullet).

Lungs

Your lungs can be very badly affected by smoking – coughs, colds, wheezing and asthma are just the start. Smoking can cause potentially fatal diseases such as pneumonia, emphysema, pleurisy (a form of severe chest infection) and lung cancer.

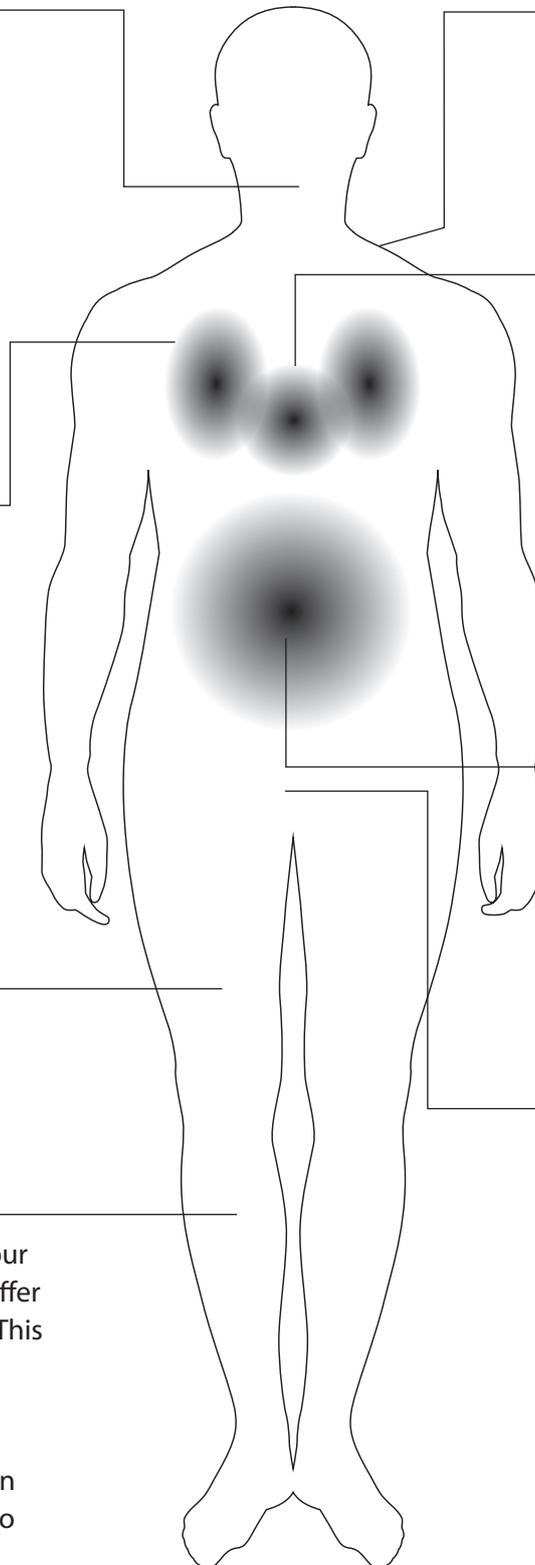
Bones

Smoking can cause bones to become weak and brittle.

Circulation

Smoking increases the risk of your arteries becoming narrowed, stiffer and coated with fatty deposits. This can cause problems like:

- ulcers
- gangrene
- cramps, pains and blockages in your arteries, which can lead to a heart attack or strokes.



Skin

Smoking reduces the amount of oxygen to the skin. This means that skin ages more quickly and looks grey and dull.

Heart

The effects of smoking on your heart are serious. Smoking increases the risk of your arteries becoming narrowed or blocked and puts you at increased risk of heart attacks and strokes. Smokers are more than twice as likely as non-smokers to die from coronary heart disease.

Stomach and other abdominal organs

Smoking increases your chance of getting stomach cancer or ulcers. You are also at risk of developing cancers in your kidneys, pancreas and bladder.

Reproduction and fertility

For men, smoking can increase your risk of impotence, damage sperm, reduce sperm count and causes testicular cancer. For women, smoking can make you less fertile and increase the risk of having a miscarriage or a baby with a low birth weight. It also increases the risk of your baby having cot death. Smoking also increases your risk of cancer of the cervix.