



**IRISH HEART
FOUNDATION**
Fighting Heart Disease & Stroke

QUIT SMOKING

to reduce your risk of
heart disease
and stroke



Smoking, heart disease and stroke

Children and older people are most at risk from passive smoking



Smoking is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, including heart attack and stroke. One in every two smokers will die of a tobacco related disease. Smokers are twice as likely to suffer a heart attack as non-smokers.

However, once you quit smoking, your health improves immediately and your risk of heart and other diseases begins to fall.

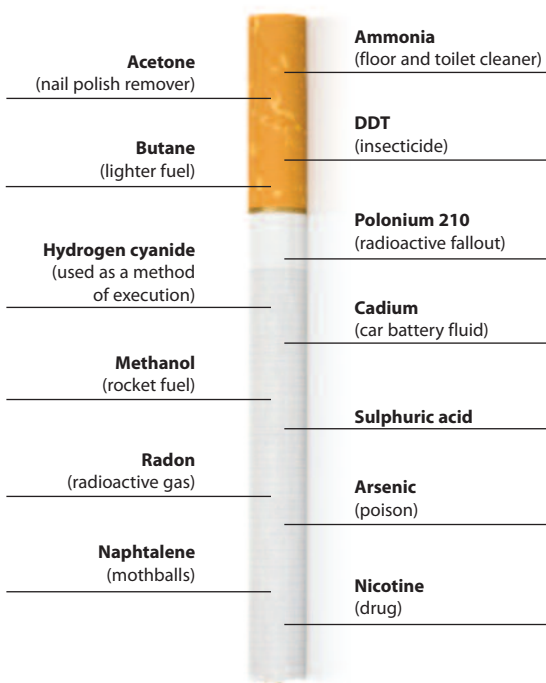
Passive smoking

Passive smoking is breathing in other people's smoke. Children and older people are most at risk from exposure to passive smoking. Passive smoking can cause heart disease, stroke, cancers, asthma in children, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and middle ear infections.

By quitting smoking you will benefit not just your own health, but that of family and friends close to you. If you are not ready to quit smoking, make your car and home smoke-free to protect others around you, especially children.

What's in a cigarette?

4,000 chemicals including 60 chemicals which are known to cause cancer:



Cigarettes also produce tar – a sticky brown substance that forms when tobacco cools. This collects in your lungs and can cause cancer.

To help you quit,
call the National Smokers' Quitline

1850 201 203

Quitting smoking is the single most important
step you can take to live longer.

How does smoking affect my heart and circulation?

- Nicotine is a highly addictive drug. It causes your blood vessels to narrow, increases your heart rate and raises your blood pressure.
- Carbon monoxide, which is a poisonous gas, reduces the amount of oxygen your blood can carry. This means that your heart has to work harder to get enough oxygen round your body. This can contribute to heart attack and angina (chest pain).
- Smoking contributes to the long-term clogging or narrowing of the arteries and also to the risk of blood clots. These clots can suddenly block an artery completely, causing a heart attack or stroke.
- Smoking increases LDL (bad) cholesterol and reduces HDL (good) cholesterol. High levels of LDL cholesterol are a risk for heart disease and stroke.
- Cigarette smoking contributes to blocked blood vessels, especially in the legs and feet, leading to poor circulation and an increased risk of developing circulatory disease.
- Smoking is even more harmful for women as women metabolise nicotine a lot faster than men. Women who smoke are almost twice as likely to have a heart attack as women who have never smoked.

Smoking increases the risk of heart attacks and strokes in women who are using the oral contraceptive pill. Smoking while pregnant increases your chance of complications and reduces your chances of getting pregnant.

The good news

It's never too late to quit smoking.
The benefits happen immediately:



- **20 minutes** after you quit smoking your blood pressure and pulse return to normal.
- **One day later**, your risk of heart attack starts to fall.
- **Day two** - your taste and smell improves.
- **Three days after** quitting for good, breathing is easier and energy levels increase.
- **Over the next three months** your circulation improves, lung function increases, you breathe more easily and the risk of heart attack and stroke reduces.
- **After one year** your risk of having a heart attack is cut to half that of a smoker.
- **Within 15 years**, you will have about the same risk of heart attack and stroke as that of a non-smoker.
- **There are many more benefits** including increased energy and you are free from the worry that you are damaging your health, and that of your family and friends.

Prepare to quit smoking

Write down your reasons for quitting - Think about the good and not so good things about quitting smoking. Compare the list and keep them close at hand to remind you why you want to quit.

Make a date to quit - Pick your date and stick to it. Think about what methods and supports are available to help you quit and have them ready before your quit date.

You will need willpower to quit smoking. Remind yourself that you can do it. It will feel good not to be controlled by cigarettes.

Quitting Smoking

- **Change your routine** - if you like a cigarette after a meal, try chewing some sugar-free chewing gum instead of lighting up.
- **Make your home and car smoke-free**
- **Reduce your caffeine** (e.g. coffee and cola drinks) and alcohol because when you quit smoking caffeine and alcohol will affect you more than when you were a smoker.
- **Learn to deal with cravings**

Some people experience recovery (also known as withdrawal) symptoms when they quit smoking. These symptoms are positive because your body is getting rid of the toxins and poisons from smoking. Examples of recovery symptoms are feeling hungry, coughing and bringing up phlegm, tingling in your fingers and toes, feeling dizzy, lack of concentration and mouth ulcers. The majority of withdrawal symptoms pass within 4 weeks. Cravings usually only last for a few minutes, so if you get a craving remember the 4D's:

- Delay at least 3-5 minutes and the urge will pass
- Deep breathe, slowly
- Drink a glass of water
- Distract yourself, call a friend, go for a walk or run.

- **Regular Physical Activity**

Now that you have quit, getting more active can help you deal with your cravings. Aim to be active for at least 30 minutes five days a week.

- **Choose healthy snacks**

Many people find they eat more when they quit, as they need to do something with their hands. Try to snack only when you are hungry and choose healthy snacks such as fruit, natural yoghurt or plain popcorn. Avoid substituting cigarettes for sweets, cakes and biscuits. Eating 3 meals a day is good for your health and eating breakfast has been shown to help with quitting smoking.

Staying stopped

- **Stay positive**

If you feel tempted to give in, remember why you decided to quit and how much progress you have made. It is important to believe in yourself, you can do it. It will feel good to take back control.

- **Take one day at a time**

Each day without a cigarette is good news for your health, your family and your pocket.

- **Keep active**

Being more active can take your mind off cigarettes.

- **Reward yourself**

Use the money you have saved by quitting to reward yourself (smoking 20 cigarettes a day costs over €3,000 a year).

- **Temptations ...just one cigarette**

Every cigarette you smoke will do you damage and it can be very difficult to stop at just one cigarette. If you are celebrating or experiencing a stressful time remember why you quit. Think what someone who doesn't smoke might do to celebrate, or to deal with stress.



Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRT)

Some people find NRT helps them to cope with cravings. NRT can increase the chances of success for smokers who are ready to quit.

The most common type of NRT are patches, lozenge, gum, inhaler and tablets (microtabs). NRT replaces some of the nicotine that you previously got from smoking, but at lower levels.

Using more than one type of NRT

If you are using NRT but you still experience cravings it is probably because you are not getting enough nicotine. Combining more than one type of NRT has been shown to be beneficial. For more information call the Irish Heart Foundation's Heart and Stroke Helpline 1890 432 787, the National Smokers' Quitline 1850 201 203 or speak to your pharmacist or doctor.

Advice on NRT

Your pharmacist can advise you on NRT products. Always read the instructions and use as directed. If you are pregnant you should speak to your doctor before taking any NRT.

Other medications to help you quit

Champix and Zyban are medications that can help some people to quit smoking. These medications are only available on prescription. Ask your GP about these medications.

What about light cigarettes, cigars or e-cigarettes?

Light or low-tar cigarettes or cigars are not an alternative to quitting smoking.

Smokers who switch to light or low-tar cigarette brands breathe in more deeply and do not reduce their risk.

Cigars contain high levels of carbon monoxide, which reduces the amount of oxygen the blood can carry, so they increase your risk of heart disease and stroke.

Evidence is not yet available to show if using an e-cigarette as a quit smoking method is effective or has side effects.

For support and advice on quitting call the National Smokers' Quitline on 1850 201 203 or visit www.quit.ie

Please make a donation today

The Irish Heart Foundation is Ireland's national charity dedicated to the reduction of death and disability from heart disease and stroke. Over 90% of our funding comes from public and business donations. We depend on your goodwill and generosity to continue our work.

If you found this booklet useful, please help our charity to continue to provide heart & stroke information by donating today.

You can make your donation today:

By post: Irish Heart Foundation,
50 Ringsend Road, Dublin 4

Online: www.irishheart.ie

By phone: 01 6685001

Personal Details

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Mobile: _____

Credit or debit card (one off donation)

Amount:

€250* €100 €50 €25 Other € _____

Card Number:

Exp Date: / Security Code**:

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

* If you donate €250 in one year (or €21 per month) we can claim tax back at no cost to you.

** Last 3 digits on the signature strip on the reverse of our card.

The Irish Heart Foundation is committed to best practice in fundraising and adheres to the **statement of guiding principles for fundraising** promoting transparency, honesty and accountability. Any personal information you provide will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003.

SEPA Direct Debit Mandate

Unique Mandate Reference:

Creditor Identifier: IE02ZZZ306322

By signing this mandate form, you authorise (A) the Irish Heart Foundation to send instructions to your bank to debit your account and (B) your bank to debit your account in accordance with the instruction from the Irish Heart Foundation.

As part of your rights, you are entitled to a refund from your bank under the terms and conditions of your agreement with your bank. A refund must be claimed within 8 weeks starting from the date on which your account was debited. Your rights are explained in a statement that you can obtain from your bank.

Please complete all the fields below marked*

*Bank Name: _____

*Address: _____

*Account Number (IBAN): _____

*Swift BIC: _____

Creditor Name: **IRISH HEART FOUNDATION**

Creditor Address: **50 RINGSEND ROAD, DUBLIN 4, IRELAND**

*Type of Payment: Recurrent (Monthly) One-off Payment

* Signature: _____ *Date Signed: _____

Please return completed form to the Irish Heart Foundation.

My monthly instalment amount is:

€21* €18 €15 €10 Other € ____ per month

*A regular gift of €21 per month could be worth an additional €9 from the Revenue Commissioners per month at no extra cost to you.

Your first contribution will be taken on either the 2nd or the 20th of the next available month. Please select which date you prefer.

2nd 20th

You will be notified in writing ten days in advance of your first direct debit. If you wish to cancel within 7 days of a direct debit payment please contact your own bank.

Preferences

I would like to hear about other IHF events, activities, awareness campaigns and appeals. Yes

Do you need a postal receipt: Yes No



IRISH HEART FOUNDATION

Fighting Heart Disease & Stroke

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Email: info@irishheart.ie

Heart and Stroke Helpline:

Locall 1890 432 787

Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm

Web:

www.irishheart.ie

www.stroke.ie



Funding:

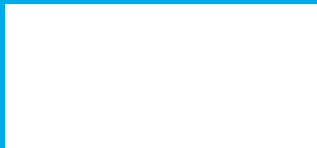
The Irish Heart Foundation is the national charity fighting heart disease and stroke and relies on charitable donations for 90 per cent of its funding. We support, educate and train people to save lives, campaign for patients, promote positive health strategies, support research and provide vital public information. We need your support - through donations, as a volunteer or on our training courses.

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Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Published by the Irish Heart Foundation in 2011. For more information, contact the Irish Heart Foundation or your local HSE office:



The information provided by the Irish Heart Foundation in this booklet was correct and accurate at the time of publication to the best of the charity's knowledge.

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