

Tick, tick, tick... Before Time Runs Out You Can Stop Smoking  
by Dr. Patricia M. Denning

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Over 43 million Americans have quit smoking... because there's proof that smoking is not good for your health. In fact, it can kill you. If you quit, your lungs will get better very soon. Your risk of lung cancer is cut in half after five years of not smoking, even sooner if you were not a heavy smoker (more than 20 cigarettes a day, 20 years of smoking).

People who smoke less than half a pack per day still have a death rate 30% higher than nonsmokers-- for one to two pack a day smokers the death rate is 100% higher; for two or more pack a day smokers, 140% higher. Smoking causes 390,000 deaths a year, deaths that didn't have to happen-- and not just lung cancer, but other cancers (mouth, throat, bladder), heart attacks, and stroke.

What else can go wrong if you smoke? You can get breathing problems that cause death too-- emphysema, or a kind of deep cough that won't go away. Your chances of not feeling healthy or fit are ten times more likely than for a nonsmoker.

Lung cancer now causes more deaths in women than for any other cancer. The death rate for women has gone up 425% over the thirty years since women started smoking as much as men. If you are having a baby, you should not smoke at all. If you smoke, your baby could weigh less than five pounds, or be more likely to die in the first month, or even be stillborn.

If you are around smokers in your family or in your regular group of friends, your chance of getting lung cancer is 30% higher than around nonsmokers.

At Watkins Memorial Health Center we offer two ways to assist smokers in breaking the habit. A health educator is available by appointment for one-to-one discussion on behavioral methods of smoking cessation. They can be reached in the Wellness Resource Center at **785.864.9570**. There is no charge for a consultation.

Nicotine patches and gum are now available without prescription at Watkins Pharmacy. Our pharmacists and physicians are available to assist you in selecting the right dosage and schedule. Also, a recently release new oral medication (Zyban or Bupropion) is now available only by prescription to help you stop smoking.

Call for an appointment at **785.864.9507** or Watkins Pharmacy at **785.864.9512** for more information.

***Join the more than 43 million who have quit smoking.***

Source: *The American Cancer Society*{3}