# 10 health benefits of stopping smoking

## Stopping smoking lets you breathe more easily

**People breathe more easily and cough less when they give up smoking because their lung capacity improves by up to 10% within nine months. In your 20s and 30s, the effect of smoking on your lung capacity may not be noticeable until you go for a run, but lung capacity naturally diminishes with age. In later years, having maximum lung capacity can mean the difference between having an active, healthy old age and wheezing when you go for a walk or climb the stairs.**

## Stop smoking gives you more energy

**Within 2 to 12 weeks of stopping smoking, your blood circulation improves. This makes all physical activity, including walking and running, much easier. You will also give a boost to your immune system, making it easier to fight off colds and flu. The increase in oxygen in the body can also reduce tiredness and the likelihood of headaches.**

## Ditch the cigarettes and feel less stressed

**The withdrawal from nicotine between cigarettes can heighten feelings of stress. As the stress of withdrawal feels the same as other stresses, it’s easy to confuse normal stress with nicotine withdrawal, so it can seem like smoking is reducing other stresses. But this is not the case. In fact, scientific studies show people’s stress levels are lower after they stop smoking. If you find that you’re prone to stress, then replacing smoking with a healthier, better way of dealing with stress can give you some real benefits.**

## Quitting leads to better sex and improved fertility

**Stopping smoking improves the body’s blood flow so improves sensitivity. Men who stop smoking may get better erections. Women may find their orgasms improve and they become aroused more easily. It’s also been found that non-smokers are three times more appealing to prospective partners than smokers.**

**Non-smokers find it easier to get pregnant. Quitting smoking improves the lining of the womb and can make men’s sperm more potent. Becoming a non-smoker increases the possibility of conceiving through**[**IVF**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/IVF/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**and reduces the likelihood of having a miscarriage. Most importantly, it improves the chances of giving birth to a healthy baby.**

## Stopping smoking improves smell and taste

**When you stop smoking, your senses of smell and taste get a boost. You may notice that food tastes and smells different as your mouth and nose recover from being dulled by the hundreds of toxic chemicals found in cigarettes.**

## Stop smoking for younger-looking skin

**Stopping smoking has been found to slow facial ageing and delay the appearance of wrinkles. The skin of a non-smoker gets more nutrients, including oxygen, and stopping smoking can reverse the sallow, lined complexion smokers often have.**

## Ex-smokers have whiter teeth and sweeter breath

**Giving up tobacco stops teeth becoming stained, and you’ll have fresher breath.
Ex-smokers are also less likely than smokers to get gum disease and prematurely lose their teeth.**

## Quit smoking to live longer

**Half of all long-term smokers die early from smoking-related diseases, including**[**heart disease**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Coronary-heart-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**,**[**lung cancer**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Cancer-of-the-lung/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**and**[**chronic bronchitis**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Bronchitis/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**. Men who quit smoking by the age of 30 add 10 years to their life. People who kick the habit at 60 add three years to their life.

It’s never too late to benefit from stopping. Being smoke-free not only adds years to your life but also greatly improves your chances of a disease-free, mobile, happier old age.**

## A smoke-free home protects your loved ones

**By stopping smoking, you’ll be protecting the health of your non-smoking friends and family, too. Breathing in secondhand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and stroke.**

**In children, it doubles the risk of getting chest illnesses, including pneumonia, ear infections, wheezing and asthma. They are also three times more likely to get lung cancer in later life compared to children who live with non-smokers. Children living with smokers are more likely to become smokers themselves in the future.**

## Ready to quit?

You are three times more likely to quit for good with the help of a trained stop smoking advisor. Find your local stop smoking advisor by visiting the West Sussex Wellbeing website: [www.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk/smokingservices](http://www.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk/smokingservices)

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