

SMOKING CAUSES MOUTH AND THROAT CANCER



**Front of Cigarette Pack
(representation only)**



**Back of Cigarette Pack
(representation only)**

Smoking can affect the health of your mouth and throat. As well as the obvious effects such as unsightly stains on your teeth and bad breath, smoking is the *major cause* of cancers of the mouth, throat, oesophagus, pharynx, larynx (voice box), tongue, lips and salivary glands.^{1,2} The longer you smoke, and the more you smoke, the greater the risk of these cancers.²

More than 80% of cancers of the mouth, nose and throat occur in people who smoke cigarettes, cigars or pipes.³

A total of 2,052 Australians died from mouth and throat cancer in 2003⁴ and there are over 4,000 new cases of these cancers each year.⁵

Someone who has ever smoked is up to nine times as likely as a non-smoker to develop one of these cancers. Smokers of one pack a day are 16 times more likely than non-smokers to develop cancer of the larynx.⁶

Smoking can also lead to gum disease (periodontal disease) and increased tartar on the teeth, which harbours plaque. This can cause serious destruction of the tissues around the teeth, which can result in tooth loss as well as pain. Smoking can also delay the healing of any injured tissues in the mouth, such as ulcers, or following oral surgery.²

Quitting smoking can significantly reduce your risk of oral cancer and improve your dental health.

Five years after you quit smoking completely the risks of cancers of the mouth, throat and oesophagus are halved.⁷

Decided to quit smoking? For help, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or call the Quitline on 131 848 or visit the Quitline web site at www.quitnow.info.au.

Sources

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