

Read the article.

The Facts About Smoking

A Preventable Peril

Every year, more than 480,000 Americans die from diseases caused by cigarette smoking. Everyone knows that smoking causes lung cancer. But did you know that smoking also leads to diseases of the heart and blood vessels? This is called *cardiovascular disease*. Tobacco products can also cause bad breath and stain your teeth.

Besides cigarettes, other tobacco products include cigars, pipe tobacco, and smokeless tobacco. Some people think these products are safer than cigarettes. They aren't. Electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, also deliver nicotine, a chemical in tobacco that is addictive. No tobacco product is safe. The truth is, no one has to smoke. Smoking is the most preventable cause of death in the United States.



Smoking Does Serious Damage

Smoking harms the heart and blood vessels. It causes a substance called *plaque* to build up in the arteries. It also causes blood to clot, or clump together. This can lead to a heart attack or a stroke. Both of these problems can cause death or permanent disability. In fact, smokers live 11 to 12 fewer years than nonsmokers.

Secondhand Smoke

You can get sick from smoking without ever touching a cigarette. Smoke that comes from other people's cigarettes is called secondhand smoke. More than half of all young children in this country live in homes where people smoke. These children often get sick from respiratory infections. Every year, about 42,000 people die from cardiovascular disease caused by secondhand smoke.

Poisonous Chemicals

Cigarette smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals that harm your health. One chemical is carbon monoxide, a poisonous gas. Another is nicotine, a highly addictive drug. Both can be bad for your heart. Nicotine makes people want to continue to smoke. As soon as the nicotine wears off, their bodies crave another cigarette.

How to Quit the Habit

Some people just suddenly quit smoking. Others gradually cut down. Either way, quitting can be hard. People may feel anxious, depressed, or irritable. A doctor can prescribe medicine to ease these symptoms. Nicotine patches, gums, and sprays also help people gradually stop smoking cigarettes. Stop-smoking classes allow people to help each other as they try to quit. No matter how you do it, quitting is one of the best ways to improve your health and add years to your life.

Write the answers.

1. More than _____ Americans die from diseases caused by cigarette smoking every year.
2. True or False: Cigars, pipes, e-cigarettes, and smokeless tobacco are safer than cigarettes. _____
3. Smoking causes _____ to build up in the arteries.
4. What is secondhand smoke? _____

5. Name two dangerous chemicals found in cigarette smoke. _____

(RI.5.1)
Answer Key

“The Facts About Smoking”

1. 480,000
2. False
3. plaque
4. smoke that comes from other people’s cigarettes
5. carbon monoxide and nicotine