



Reduce your health risks associated with tobacco use

Tobacco use remains the single most preventable cause of death in the United States. There are a number of devastating illnesses that can be linked to tobacco use, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, chronic bronchitis and emphysema. The good news is that if you stop using tobacco, the health benefits begin right away, so it's never too late to kick the habit.

Quitting isn't easy, but it's worth it

It's well known that it isn't easy to kick a bad habit – especially tobacco use, such as smoking. Many ex-smokers say that quitting was the hardest thing they ever did. Why? Smoking is an addiction, and it takes time and effort to break free from nicotine addiction.

Some people feel they have smoked too long to benefit from quitting. However, no matter how long you have smoked, you will begin to get healthier almost immediately after you quit. For example:

- Within 12 hours, your pulse, blood pressure and carbon monoxide levels return to normal.
- Within 48 to 72 hours, the nicotine is gone from your body.
- Within a few weeks, your blood circulation begins to improve and breathing becomes easier.
- Within a year, your risk of coronary heart disease is cut in half.
- Within 10 years your lung cancer death rate is cut in half
- Within 15 years your risk of coronary heart disease is back to that of a nonsmoker's.

Smoking can be a deadly habit

Cigarette smoking accounts for nearly one-third of all cancer deaths in this country each year. It is the most common risk factor for the development of lung cancer, which is the leading cause of cancer death. It is also associated with many other types of cancer, including cancers of the larynx, kidney, pancreas and cervix. Smoking also increases the risk of other health problems, such as chronic lung disease, heart disease, premature delivery and low birth weight.

If you or someone you care about uses tobacco, visit the Healthwise Knowledgebase at LifeSteps Online. Or you may call a health coach for help in planning how to control or quit tobacco use.

Besides reducing your risk factors for many diseases, quitting tobacco will help you enjoy improved circulation, have fewer breathing problems and feel less winded when climbing stairs. You'll have more energy, fresher breath and a better sense of smell and taste.

The Great American Smokeout®

Every year, smokers across the nation take part in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout® by smoking less or quitting for the day. The event challenges people to stop using tobacco and raises awareness of the many effective ways to quit for good.

The American Cancer Society holds the [Great American Smokeout®](#) each November to help smokers quit cigarettes for at least one day, in hopes they will quit forever. This year's event will be held on November 18, 2004.

Long-term gain offsets short-term pain

Quitting tobacco may cause short-term after-effects, especially for those who have smoked a lot of cigarettes for a long period of time. People who quit smoking may feel anxious, irritable, hungry, more tired, and have difficulty sleeping temporarily. They may also have difficulty concentrating. Many tobacco users gain weight when they quit, which can be offset by replacing the tobacco habit with a healthier one, like exercise. These changes are difficult, but people who kick the habit have the opportunity for a healthier future, such as reduced risk for lung cancer (and other cancers), stroke and coronary heart disease.

To stop smoking or using other tobacco products, visit the Dialog Center at LifeSteps Online for information on topics such as prevention and cessation of cigarette smoking, control of tobacco use and quitting tobacco use.

From LifeSteps Online, click on the blue button that says Dialog Center, log into the Dialog Center and then go to the Healthwise Knowledgebase to search the medical topics. (The Healthwise Knowledgebase is similar to a medical encyclopedia.) Access the keyword "Tobacco Cessation" on the Healthwise Knowledgebase. Once in the Knowledgebase, you will be able to get ideas for building a cessation plan that works for you. In addition, you may call a health coach to get support in deciding which options for controlling or quitting tobacco use are best for you and in preparing you to be successful in achieving your goals.

Your LifeSteps resources are committed to helping you and your family members enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

Look for more resources coming in 2005!

Don't delay another day Call a LifeSteps resource today

There are a number of therapies or resources that can help you stop smoking. LifeSteps Online and Lifesteps health coaches will have more information. Visit LifeSteps Online through the Employee Services area of our company-wide portal at <http://MyStandard> from work, or www.asdlifesteps.com from home or anywhere you have Internet access.

You may also wish to call a coach at the following number for support in making a plan that works for you:

1-877-LIFE-123 toll-free
(1-877-543-3123)

Hearing-impaired callers,
please dial 1-800-504-5539 TTY
24 hours a day • 7 days a week

LifeSteps is a program of educational resources and tools to help you and your family make informed choices about your safety, health and financial well-being. LifeSteps is designed to protect your confidentiality every step of the way. While LifeSteps is sponsored by American Standard Companies, services like health coaches and LifeSteps Online are administered by a third-party provider of services to the company's group health benefit plans. This means that any personal health information you or a family member provides to a LifeSteps provider is protected by federal and state privacy laws and will not be disclosed to American Standard except under limited circumstances as authorized by law for administration of the company's group health plans.