



Within 20 minutes after you smoke your last cigarette, your body begins a series of positive health changes that continue for years. Even if you have smoked for a long time, you can still improve and protect your health by quitting.

20 Minutes After Quitting

Your heart rate drops towards a normal level.



12 hours After Quitting

Carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

2 Weeks to 3 Months After Quitting

Your heart attack risk begins to drop.
Your lung function begins to improve.



1 to 9 Months After Quitting

Your coughing and shortness of breath decrease.

1 Year After Quitting

Your added risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

5 to 15 Years After Quitting

Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker's.



10 Years After Quitting

Your lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker's.
Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas decreases.

15 Years After Quitting

Your risk of coronary heart disease is back to that of a nonsmoker's.



Speak to your health care provider about help with quitting. By getting counseling and appropriate medications, you will double your chances of successfully quitting. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for help.

Adapted From:

Centers for Disease Control, Tobacco Information and Prevention Source. Accessed at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr_2004/posters/20mins.htm.