



香港紅十字會
HONG KONG RED CROSS

Hazards of Smoking



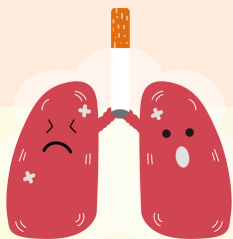
Hong Kong were around 581,500 conventional cigarette smokers in the year, accounting for 9.5% of people aged 15 or above. Each of these smokers consumed an average of 13 conventional cigarette sticks a day. Hong Kong's smoking prevalence fell from 10.2% in 2019 to 9.5% in 2021. However, the number of people using e-cigarettes has significantly increased from 7,200 in 2019 to 17,500 last year.



- Tobacco contains more than 7,000 chemicals, most of which are toxic and radioactive including over 70 carcinogens.
- Three major killers in tobacco are tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide.

Tar

- The brownish and sticky substance causes stains on teeth and nails.
- Reduces lung elasticity
- Causes cough, sputum and shortness of breath
- Leads to cancers of the mouth, throat and lung



Nicotine

- Reaches the brain within 7 seconds
- Stimulates the central nervous system and causes addiction
- Leads to an increase in blood pressure and heart rate, myocardial infarction and cerebral stroke









Carbon Monoxide

- Commonly found in the emission of vehicles
- Reduce the oxygen content in blood which hinders blood circulation and affects intelligence and memory.



Smoking is hazardous to health. Six of the world's eight leading causes of death are caused by tobacco use, which includes heart diseases, cerebrovascular diseases, lower respiratory infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, tuberculosis and cancers of the trachea, bronchus and lung.

Diseases that are caused by smoking

 Cancers	Lung cancer, oral cavity and pharyngeal cancer, laryngeal cancer, etc.
 Cardio-cerebrovascular diseases	Coronary heart disease, stroke, atherosclerosis, peripheral vascular disease, etc.
 Eye diseases	Blindness, cataract, etc.
 Respiratory diseases	Pneumonia, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, tuberculosis, etc.
 Pregnancy-related diseases	Ectopic pregnancy, fetal growth restriction, premature delivery, miscarriage and other complications during pregnancy, etc.
 Other diseases	Impotence, infertility, osteoporosis, etc.



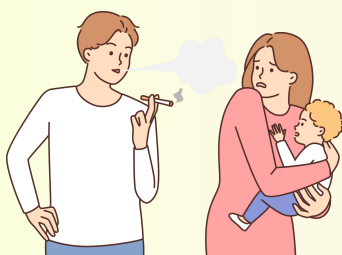
Are e-cigarettes less harmful?

E-cigarettes heat a chemical mixture (e-liquid), which does not contain tobacco, to produce aerosol for users to inhale. With nicotine or not, the aerosol contains various harmful substances. E-cigarettes do not help smoking cessation although they are often marketed as an alternative to conventional cigarette smoking. E-cigarettes should not be considered as another option for smoking.



What is 'Third-hand Smoke'?

'Third-hand Smoke' refers to the chemical residuals of tobacco smoke that clings to places such as various surfaces, clothes, hair and skin after the cigarette is extinguished. These toxic chemical substances can remain on the surface of household utensils and furniture of the indoor area, carpets, floors, walls, ceilings, etc.



If needed, you might seek support from a smoking cessation counselling service.



Integrated Smoking Cessation Hotline of the Department of Health 1833 183



References:

The Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office of the Department of Health

The above information is for reference only.

Editor: K W Lam

Updated on 31/05/2023