

CANCER EXPLAINED PRESENTS

A FREE HEALTH HANDOUT

QUITTING SMOKING

The single biggest step to lower cancer risk

FREE TO PRINT · PLAIN LANGUAGE · SOURCES ON THE BACK

A CANCER EXPLAINED HANDOUT · BASED ON **NCI · CDC** · UPDATED **2026-07-04**
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Quitting Smoking

The single biggest step to lower cancer risk

1 Why it's worth it — at any age

- [ ] Smoking causes about 1 in 3 cancer deaths in the U.S. — not just lung cancer, but at least a dozen cancer types.
- [ ] Your body starts recovering within hours of quitting; over years, cancer risk drops substantially.
- [ ] Quitting also protects the people around you from secondhand smoke.

2 What actually helps

- [ ] Counseling plus quit medicines (nicotine replacement, varenicline, or bupropion) roughly doubles your chances of quitting for good.
- [ ] Free coaching: call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-855-DÉJELO-YA in Spanish) or text QUITNOW to 333888.
- [ ] SmokefreeTXT and the quitSTART app offer free 24/7 support.
- [ ] Slips are normal — most people try several times before quitting for good. Each attempt teaches you something.

3 Talk to your doctor about

- [ ] Which quit medicine fits you, including prescription options.
- [ ] Whether you qualify for lung cancer screening (ages 50-80 with a 20 pack-year history).

THE BOTTOM LINE

It is never too late to quit — and you don't have to do it alone. Free help: 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Sources: NCI: Smokefree.gov (smokefree.gov) · CDC: How to quit (cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/quit-smoking/index.html)

Learn more in plain language: cancerexplained.org/prevention/quitting-smoking · **Updated:** 2026-07-04

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