



THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO DURING THE PANDEMIC: QUITTING SMOKING AND VAPING

The COVID-19 pandemic is a stressful time for everyone. Stress can lead to greater tobacco consumption, but it is critical to consider reducing or stopping that consumption. The most effective and safest way to quit is to consult a medical professional. In addition to receiving medical guidance, some other tips are:

- Reflect on what triggers you to smoke or vape
- Incorporate new, less harmful daily rituals (e.g., making a cup of tea or going for a walk)
- Join support networks online
- Enlist help and support from loved ones
- Avoid situations that tempt you to smoke
- Picture your life without smoking

Quitting may be difficult and require several tries, but you owe it to yourself and loved ones to try.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

How do vaping and smoking affect your body? Let's test your knowledge.

1. The COVID-19 virus enters your lungs and kills off cells and tissue.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. Vaping can make you nearly 7 times as likely to contract COVID-19 than those who do not vape.
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. You can live a normal life without your lungs.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. When quitting smoking or vaping, it's recommended to consult a qualified medical professional.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. Only older adult populations are at risk for dying from COVID-19.
 - a. True
 - b. False
6. Lungs regulate the oxygen and carbon dioxide levels in your body.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Answers: 1.a 2.a 3.b 4.a 5.b 6.a



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COVID-19 AND SMOKING AND VAPING

DANGEROUS FUMES



COVID-19 & ITS ATTACK ON YOUR LUNGS

Breathing is an essential function that we don't often think about. Because our body involuntarily does this task for us, it's easy to forget its importance. But what if something gets in the way of our body's automatic capability? Then, breathing suddenly becomes all we can think about.

For millions of Americans, the COVID-19 pandemic placed a new focus on this once ignored bodily task. The COVID-19 virus affects everyone differently, but one thing is certain: it is not good for your lungs. The virus launches an attack on the body's respiratory system, particularly on the lungs. Lungs help your body take in oxygen and release carbon dioxide. Without having at least one lung (though, two is preferable!), your body would find it impossible to live on its own, without extreme medical intervention.

As you can see, lungs play a critical role in keeping your body alive. On the other hand, the COVID-19 virus tries its best to damage these necessary organs by targeting the cells lining the lungs. This attack can cause difficulty breathing, fever, congestion, coughing and a number of other undesirable symptoms. Even more concerning, however, is that COVID-19 can cause worsening conditions, such as pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome, heart failure and blood clots.

Due to the dangerous nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential to limit activities that make your body more susceptible to the harmful effects of the disease. Both smoking and vaping have been found to be much higher risk factors for contracting the COVID-19 virus and once contracted, worse health outcomes.

DANGERS TO YOUR RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

Like a tornado, COVID-19 can tear through your respiratory system and cause serious damage to your lungs. Cells that line your lungs, which act as immunity barriers, are efficiently targeted and killed by the virus. This cell die-off leaves your lungs and other organs exposed to further harm.

In research studies, people who smoke or vape have been shown to contract the virus more easily and once contracted, face greater health risks. For anyone that smokes or vapes, this knowledge may be understood. Smoking and vaping already harm the lungs, even without the ever-present threat of a deadly virus. Possibly because of increased inflammation, smoking and vaping put a stress on the lungs, which makes it even more difficult for the body to fight off the virus. Existing research tells us that tobacco smoking and vaping worsen immune function.



Smoking can also lead to underlying conditions putting an individual at risk for serious COVID-19 complications. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), a condition often caused by smoking, puts a huge strain on your lungs and breathing ability. Underlying conditions such as COPD can worsen COVID-19 recovery. In addition, smoking impairs COVID-19 recovery because of an enzyme, ACE2, found in the lungs. This enzyme can lead to increased chances of severe acute respiratory syndrome.

Quitting smoking or vaping can be one of the most valuable actions you can take to limit your risk. And if you're considering taking up smoking or vaping, you may want to think twice about the destructive effects on your lungs.



VAPING — A PARTICULAR RISK TO THE YOUNG AND “HEALTHY”

The COVID-19 pandemic and its death toll have primarily affected older adult populations. Many young people consider themselves safe from the dangers of the virus' effects. However, vaping presents a particular risk for the young and otherwise healthy. People who vape may be nearly 7 times as likely to contract the virus than individuals who do not vape.

Vaping has also been found to cause a new respiratory illness, E-cigarette or Vaping Product Use-Associated Lung Injury (EVALI). EVALI is a potentially fatal respiratory illness recognized by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) after an increase of vaping related hospital admissions. One contributing factor to EVALI is the addition of Vitamin E-acetate.

Because of vaping's increased risk of respiratory diseases, such as EVALI, vaping greatly increases an individual's chance of contracting and possibly dying from the COVID-19 virus. It is now more important than ever to consider quitting vaping.

