

Smoking - the financial cost

Smoking costs money as well as affecting your health. Cigarettes are expensive and quitting can save you money now as well as saving on future health costs. If you need an added incentive to quit, think about how much of your weekly income is going up in smoke.

One packet of 25 cigarettes costs around \$14 and the price keeps rising. What could you do for yourself and your family with that extra money? More than you think.

At today's prices, if you smoke one pack of cigarettes each day for ten years, you'll spend over \$51,000 – easily enough to buy a new car or put a deposit on a house.

After one day

After one day of not smoking, you've got an extra \$14 in your pocket. You could treat yourself to a cafe lunch or buy a couple of your favourite magazines.

The health benefits of not smoking for one day include:

- Most of the nicotine is cleared from your body.
- Your blood pressure and heart rate drop towards normal levels.

After two days

You've saved \$28. You could go to the movies, go to the footy or cricket, or treat yourself to a nice bottle of wine.

The health benefits of not smoking for two days include:

- You notice that your skin, hair and breath smell fresher.
- Less carbon monoxide in your system means your lungs are more efficient.

After one week

Now you've got an extra \$98 in your pocket. You could have a facial, take someone to dinner, go to a gig, or buy a few books, CDs or DVDs.

The health benefits of not smoking for one week include:

- The small hair-like structures that clean your lungs, called cilia, are starting to work again. Accumulated phlegm from smoking will loosen and you may start to cough it up.
- You will have higher blood levels of protective antioxidants, such as Vitamin C.

After one month

You've saved \$425. You could go away for a weekend, cover your monthly petrol costs, or treat yourself to some new clothes.

The health benefits of not smoking for one month include:

- Your lungs are working more efficiently.
- Exercising is easier.

- Your immune system is starting to recover.

After three to six months

After three months you've saved over \$1,200. This is enough for a new computer or a plasma TV. After six months, you've got \$2,500 to spend. You could take your family for a holiday in Queensland or buy a return ticket to London or the United States.

The health benefits of not smoking for three to six months include:

- You don't cough and wheeze as much anymore. Your lung function has continued to improve.
- Blood flow to your extremities, like fingers and toes, improves.
- Your body is better at healing cuts and wounds.
- You may feel less stressed or in a better mood than when you were smoking.

After one year

You've saved \$5,100. This is enough for an around-the-world plane ticket, some new furniture, or a lump sum off your mortgage.

The health benefits of not smoking for one year include:

- Your increased risk of premature death from heart attack is halved.
- Your blood pressure returns to normal.

Other cost-saving benefits of quitting

If you quit smoking, you'll save money in many other ways, including:

- You're less likely to suffer from colds, the flu or other respiratory infections, which means fewer trips to the doctor, less money spent on medications and fewer sick days.
- You won't need so many visits to the dentist to have your teeth professionally cleaned.
- You don't have to spend as much time and money on maintaining the house. For example, smoking inside your home discolours paint and wallpaper.
- You cut down on your cleaning bills because clothes, furniture upholstery and the interior of your car no longer stink of cigarette smoke.
- The risk of fire in your home is lower.

Future benefits

The health and financial benefits of quitting continue as the years go by.

- Your chances of conceiving a baby improve. Smoking can cause fertility problems, such as impotence in men and a lower chance of conceiving in women. Women who smoke during pregnancy are more likely to have a miscarriage.
- Over time, your senses of smell and taste will slowly improve.
- Within two to five years, your risk of stroke is substantially reduced. You've also saved between \$10,000 and \$25,000.
- After 10 years, your risk of lung cancer is less than half that of a continuing smoker and continues to decline (provided the disease is not already present). You've also saved over \$51,000.
- After 15 years, your risk of coronary heart disease is nearly the same as a lifetime non-smoker. You've also saved over \$76,000.
- Quitting smoking benefits men and women of all ages and improves health in general.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Your pharmacist

- Quitline Tel. 13 7848 (13 QUIT)

Things to remember

- If you need added incentive to quit, think about how much of your weekly income is going up in smoke every week.
- At today's prices, if you smoke one pack of cigarettes per day for 10 years, you'll spend over \$51,000 – easily enough to buy a new car.

This page has been produced in consultation with, and approved by:

Quit

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