

Death and Disease Attributable to Tobacco Use



Deaths Due to Smoking-Related Illness

Cigarette smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death in the United States. More than 430,000 Americans die each year from smoking-related illness.¹ One in every five U.S. deaths is smoking related.² The ongoing human toll from tobacco use has been documented in a number of ways:

One in every five deaths in the United States is smoking related

Human Toll From Tobacco Use

- ▶ "About 10 million people in the U.S. have died from causes attributed to smoking (including heart disease, emphysema, and other respiratory diseases) since the first Surgeon General's report on smoking and health in 1964—2 million of these deaths were the result of lung cancer alone."³
- ▶ "Between 1960 and 1990, deaths from lung cancer among women have increased by more than 400%—exceeding breast cancer deaths in the mid-1980s."⁴
- ▶ "African Americans continue to suffer disproportionately from chronic and preventable disease compared with white Americans."⁵ "Of the three leading causes of death in African Americans—heart disease, cancer, and stroke—smoking and other tobacco use are major contributors."⁶
- ▶ "Annually, exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) causes an estimated 3,000 deaths from lung cancer among American adults. Scientific studies also link secondhand smoke with heart disease."⁷
- ▶ "Infants and young children exposed to ETS experience increased rates of lower respiratory tract infections (such as bronchitis and pneumonia) and ear infections, an exacerbation of chronic respiratory symptoms (such as asthma), a reduced rate of lung growth, and an increased risk of death from SIDS."⁸

Comparative Causes of Annual Deaths in the United States⁹ (Number of Deaths in Thousands)



Source: CDC, Actual Causes of Death, United States, 1990

CDC

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www.cdc.gov/tobacco

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