



WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REPORT

A publication of the Epidemiology Unit
Ministry of Health

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A Simple and Practical Guide to Quit Smoking

Quitting smoking has immediate as well as long-term benefits. It reduces risks of diseases caused by smoking and improves health in general. Realizing the hazards of smoking and benefits of quitting will help you quit more successfully. Quitting is better done after some preparation and planning. You should also be confident that you really need to quit and that you can do it.

Hazards of smoking

Smoking can affect almost all systems of the body. Smoking is strongly associated with heart attacks, strokes, a number of cancers, impotence in men, sub-fertility, obstruction of blood vessels leading to amputation of limbs, tuberculosis, wheezing, bronchitis and many other diseases. It prematurely kills one out of two of all its users. Cigarette smoke contains more than 4,000 toxic chemicals and 43 of them are known to cause cancers. It causes poverty and worsens existing poverty.

Some health benefits of quitting smoking

Within 20 minutes after you smoke that last cigarette, your body begins a series of changes that continue for years.

20 Minutes After Quitting

Your heart rate drops.

12 hours After Quitting

Carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

2 Weeks to 3 Months After Quitting

Your heart attack risk begins to drop.
Your lung function begins to improve.

1 to 9 Months After Quitting

Your coughing and shortness of breath decreases.

1 Year After Quitting

Your added risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker.

5 Years After Quitting

Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a non-smoker within 5-15 years after quitting.

10 Years After Quitting

Your lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker.

Your risk of cancers of mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney and pancreas decreases.

15 Years After Quitting

Your risk of coronary heart disease is back to that of a non-smoker.

Decision to quit smoking.

- Quitting is more successful when it is done after some deliberation and preparation.
- There are many good reasons to quit smoking. You may have your own reasons to quit. Make your list of reasons.

Some of the reasons could be.....

- To have better health.
 - Be a role model to your children.
 - Protect the family from passive smoking.
 - Save the money that you are wasting.
- Stick/keep your list of reasons in a place where you can see it often. Do not let outside influences such as pressure from friends get in your way. Dwell on your reasons and stick to your decision.

How to Get Ready to quit.

- Pick a Quit date, and a time. Mark it on the calendar. You always have to pick a quick date to stop smoking, this date may be special day like your birthday or the birthday of a loved one, may be the 1st day of the month or a "poya" day. But this day should not be too far away. If you wish to select a time, a

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morning would be preferable.

- Remove all cigarette packets and ash trays around you. Clean your room/ home /office room of any cigarette butts or ashes. Change the cigarette smelling bed linen, start afresh. If possible get a dental cleanup to get rid of the tobacco stains in your teeth.

Learn new skills and behaviors.

- Think about the most tempting situations and places that makes you smoke and list them. Try to avoid those places and situations as far as possible. Some people need to smoke a cigarette with the bed tea or before breakfast. You can replace it with some other activity like listening to music, physical exercise etc.
- Think of healthier things to do instead of smoking. Drinking a fruit juice, eating a banana. keeping your hands involved by scribbling or squeezing a paper ball are possible alternatives.
- Always try to avoid alcohol.
- Plan enjoyable things for each day. Keep yourself busy.

Get support from your family and friends.

- Let your family, close friends and colleagues at work place know that you are quitting and you need their support. You may even avoid your smoking friends and ask them not to offer you cigarettes.
- If they offer it, you should say NO firmly and with confidence, giving reasons for your decision.
- Let them know that you may not be your usual self for several weeks after you quit and to be supportive and tolerant.
- You always have to maintain your smoking free status no matter what and avoid relapses, and believe in yourself. It will get easier with time, as you develop more confidence.
- If you can get counseling from your doctor you will have more chances of success.
- Discuss your success at home/ in the staff room/lunch room, with your family and friends. Continue to use the effective strategies to stay quit in the next few weeks and try not to slip even once.

If you slip by any chance....

- It is common to slip after quitting. It does not mean you are back in the habit. Do not worry, do not feel discouraged or guilty.
- Think what caused the slip and keep that in mind to avoid it next time.
- Think of your reasons for quitting and get back on track immediately

Celebrate your success

- Celebrate your success with your family and close friends. Let them feel that you are a different person now.
- Renew your determination never to smoke again.
- Enjoy the freedom from constant cravings and tension for a cigarette.
- Offer help to your friends and family members who want to quit smoking, let them know your success story and your achievements.

How to prepare for difficult situations

You need to anticipate difficult situations. These could be events, occasions or certain activities where smoking is usually associated and you may get a craving for a cigarette in some of these situations. There may also be people that prompt or push you to smoke. Identify these people. Think ahead of strategies to handle these situations and people. A craving for a cigarette may be strongly influenced by fluctuations in your own decision not to smoke. Think of healthy alternatives to cope with cravings and withdrawal symptoms like bad mood, tremors and headaches or compulsions.

- **Not** everybody who quits get withdrawal symptoms. Even if you get them, you do not have to suffer long, they will pass soon.
- When you feel tightness in the chest, do deep breathing.
- If you feel irritable, relax your mind by deep breathing and physical exercise.
- If you start gaining weight, engage in physical exercises and change your diet pattern.
- Some individuals experience constipation or stomach pain after quitting. They can try eating more vegetables and fruits and drinking more water.
- If you are feeling tired or having lack of energy, try going to the temple, church or mosque.
- If you have trouble sleeping, avoid tea or coffee, try meditation.
- Cough or dryness in the throat may be relieved by drinking water or fruit juices.

For a few people who are unable to find support from outside or within themselves to quit and sustain, nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) may be of help. NRT is not yet freely available in Sri Lanka. You may get more information about NRT from a qualified medical practitioner.

Quitting is POSSIBLE. A large number of people have quit successfully, a great majority of them without any professional help. Any one can quit. All you need is the confidence that you can do it; and you will do it.

We appreciate the guidance of Prof. Diyanath Samarasinghe, Dept of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Colombo

This article was compiled by Dr. Athula Liyanapathirana of the Epidemiology Unit

Table 1: Vaccine-preventable Diseases & AFP

21st - 27th May 2011(21st Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province									Number of cases during current week in 2011	Number of cases during same week in 2010	Total number of cases to date in 2011	Total number of cases to date in 2010	Difference between the number of cases to date in 2011 & 2010
	W	C	S	N	E	NW	NC	U	Sab					
Acute Flaccid Paralysis	01	00	01	00	02	01	00	01	02	08	00	39	34	+ 14.7 %
Diphtheria	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	-	-	-	-	-
Measles	00	01	00	08	00	02	00	00	00	11	02	68	40	+ 70.0 %
Tetanus	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	08	10	- 20.0 %
Whooping Cough	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	15	10	+ 50.0 %
Tuberculosis	41	02	08	05	65	16	04	01	04	146	61	3315	3546	- 06.5 %

Table 2: Newly Introduced Notifiable Disease

21st - 27th May 2011(21st Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province									Number of cases during current week in 2011	Number of cases during same week in 2010	Total number of cases to date in 2011	Total number of cases to date in 2010	Difference between the number of cases to date in 2011 & 2010
	W	C	S	N	E	NW	NC	U	Sab					
Chickenpox	19	03	11	03	14	09	08	04	04	85	48	2117	1639	+ 21.4 %
Meningitis	03 CB=2 GM=1	01 KD=1	03 GL=1 MT=2	00	00	04 KN=4	00	00	01 KG=1	12	31	379	670	- 43.4 %
Mumps	13	04	03	01	17	14	03	03	05	63	16	1001	390	+ 156.7 %
Leishmaniasis	00	00	07 HB=7	00	00	01 KN=1	02 AP=2	00	00	10	02	281	147	+ 91.2 %

Key to Table 1 & 2

Provinces: W: Western, C: Central, S: Southern, N: North, E: East, NC: North Central, NW: North Western, U: Uva, Sab: Sabaragamuwa.
DPDHS Divisions: CB: Colombo, GM: Gampaha, KL: Kalutara, KD: Kandy, ML: Matale, NE: Nuwara Eliya, GL: Galle, HB: Hambantota, MT: Matara, JF: Jaffna, KN: Killinochchi, MN: Mannar, VA: Vavuniya, MU: Mullaitivu, BT: Batticaloa, AM: Ampara, TR: Trincomalee, KM: Kalmunai, KR: Kurunegala, PU: Puttalam, AP: Anuradhapura, PO: Polonnaruwa, BD: Badulla, MO: Moneragala, RP: Ratnapura, KG: Kegalle.

Data Sources:

Weekly Return of Communicable Diseases: Diphtheria, Measles, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Chickenpox, Meningitis, Mumps.

Special Surveillance: Acute Flaccid Paralysis.

Leishmaniasis is notifiable only after the General Circular No: 02/102/2008 issued on 23 September 2008. .

Dengue Prevention and Control Health Messages

Look for plants such as bamboo, bohemia, rampe and banana in your surroundings and maintain them free of water collection.

Table 4: Selected notifiable diseases reported by Medical Officers of Health
21st - 27th May 2011 (21st Week)

DPDHS Division	Dengue Fever / DHF*		Dysentery		Encephalitis		Enteric Fever		Food Poisoning		Leptospirosis		Typhus Fever		Viral Hepatitis		Human Rabies		Returns Received Timely**
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	%
Colombo	250	2257	5	94	0	4	4	68	1	9	17	186	0	5	0	20	0	2	85
Gampaha	55	764	2	60	0	9	2	23	0	12	8	287	1	14	1	37	0	2	73
Kalutara	60	432	1	68	0	3	0	27	0	14	4	121	0	0	0	4	0	0	83
Kandy	17	195	4	180	0	4	0	14	0	26	6	76	2	48	3	28	0	0	78
Matale	16	98	3	59	0	3	0	9	0	8	12	105	0	10	0	4	1	0	100
Nuwara	6	55	5	155	0	3	1	25	0	14	1	24	3	40	0	9	0	1	92
Galle	14	201	2	36	0	5	0	3	0	5	5	75	0	15	0	7	0	0	89
Hambantota	18	208	2	19	0	4	0	2	0	8	19	343	2	26	0	4	0	0	100
Matara	13	179	2	31	0	1	0	6	2	10	14	176	3	37	1	10	0	1	100
Jaffna	5	144	5	81	0	3	6	131	1	12	0	2	2	165	2	16	0	1	100
Kilinochchi	0	33	1	10	0	3	0	5	5	9	0	2	0	7	0	3	0	0	50
Mannar	0	20	0	9	0	0	0	10	9	75	0	11	0	27	0	1	0	0	20
Vavuniya	2	43	1	20	0	9	0	6	0	36	0	31	0	2	0	1	0	0	100
Mullaitivu	1	7	0	27	0	1	1	2	0	0	2	5	0	1	0	2	0	0	75
Batticaloa	31	497	24	377	0	3	1	5	1	10	2	18	0	1	0	2	0	4	93
Ampara	3	47	4	49	0	0	0	7	0	21	1	51	0	1	0	7	0	0	71
Trincomalee	4	85	18	439	0	1	0	1	0	8	4	68	0	3	1	5	0	0	91
Kurunegala	27	285	18	145	0	6	2	47	3	36	66	1265	0	42	1	15	1	2	91
Puttalam	6	233	5	88	0	0	1	14	0	5	0	78	1	11	0	5	0	1	78
Anuradhapu	9	104	4	62	0	1	0	2	0	22	12	218	3	16	1	6	0	0	89
Polonnaruw	7	123	6	38	0	1	0	8	0	11	0	68	0	1	1	8	0	0	57
Badulla	6	123	17	97	0	4	3	32	0	5	0	29	3	28	1	22	0	0	60
Monaragala	4	105	2	29	1	3	1	19	0	8	1	148	0	38	0	35	0	0	91
Ratnapura	13	303	16	242	0	3	1	21	0	13	17	265	0	21	1	22	0	2	78
Kegalle	12	163	3	45	0	11	2	37	0	18	9	162	0	13	3	41	0	0	82
Kalmunai	0	16	26	327	0	0	0	0	1	12	0	3	0	2	0	2	0	1	85
SRI LANKA	579	6720	176	2787	01	85	25	524	23	407	200	3817	20	574	16	316	02	17	84

Source: Weekly Returns of Communicable Diseases WRCD).

*Dengue Fever / DHF refers to Dengue Fever / Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever.

**Timely refers to returns received on or before 27th May, 2011 Total number of reporting units =320. Number of reporting units data provided for the current week: 271

A = Cases reported during the current week. B = Cumulative cases for the year.

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