

## Effects of Smoking on Being Active

[www.smarterthansmoking.org.au](http://www.smarterthansmoking.org.au)

### Smoking cigarettes reduces your fitness

How often do you see professional athletes smoking on the sidelines? Never. This is because athletes care about their health and fitness and most know cigarette smoking damages their performance and health.

Smoking significantly reduces the body's fitness and ability to filter inhaled air. When people who smoke play sport or exercise, poisons from cigarettes reduce their ability to perform. The poisons which really hurt performance are carbon monoxide, nicotine and tar.

### Carbon Monoxide causes

- Swelling of the respiratory track lining meaning that less air is drawn into the lungs, and less oxygen is available for the body's cells.
- Less oxygen to bind to the haemoglobin in the body. This means that less oxygen reaches the brain, heart, muscles and other organs.
- Reduced ability of the muscle cells to take up oxygen. This means muscles don't function as well and sports performance is reduced.

### Nicotine causes

- Increased heart rate, which means a smoker's heart has to work much harder to produce the same effect as the heart of a person who is smoke-free.
- Constriction of the blood vessels leading to reduced blood flow and increased blood pressure.

### Tar causes

- Reduced elasticity of the lungs resulting in less air being breathed in and out.

### Being active is a lot harder if you smoke

When being active, those who smoke are:

- More easily exhausted
- Suffer shortness of breath
- Have reduced endurance
- Slower to react and
- Have poorer visual judgement.

A person who smokes cannot run or exercise as well as a person who is smoke-free. The immediate effects of smoking on the body make it more difficult for the body to perform at its best. Even after just one day of being smoke-free more oxygen is available to the blood and physical performance improves.

## Benefits of stopping smoking



Within one to two days

Carbon monoxide and nicotine will be cleared from the body.



After one month

Blood pressure returns to normal and lung function improves.



After three months

The lungs are able to clean themselves and blood flow improves.

### References

1. [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Smoking\\_effects\\_on\\_your\\_body](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Smoking_effects_on_your_body)