

BULLET ANSWERS TO THE MOST COMMON QUESTIONS POSED BY YOUTHS AFTER THEY SEE OUR HEALTH-SCIENCE VIDEOS:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWSR5ovPowo>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfetYfRsq1k&feature=em-share_video_user and **SELECTED REFERENCES**

1. What can I do about family members who smoke?

Encourage them to quit by: teaching them what you learned in class, showing them the Summary Handout, showing them our YouTube Video (URL in Handout), referring them to the free 1-800-QUIT NOW phone line (if they'll call it) and referring them to their doctor (if they'll go). Tell them you want them healthy because you love them.

2. What can I do if I and/or my family members try to quit and can't?

Call 1-800-Quit Now for free one on one personalized ongoing phone help. They can also refer you to a free quit smoking class near you and mail you practical quit literature. Also consult your doctor.

3. What are the short and long-term health risks if you smoke?

This is what you just saw in the Videos and which are also summarized in your Summary Handout

4. What are the short and long-term benefits if you quit?

Within days to months, smoker's breath disappears, ability to taste and smell improves, breathing is easier and exercise capacity improves. Within 1-10 years, the risk of all cancers, heart disease and strokes progressively decrease. After 10 to 15 years of quitting, the risk of premature death from smoking approaches that of a person who never smoked.

5. Compared to cigarettes, what is the relative safety or lack of it regarding cigars, pipes, chewing (smokeless) tobacco and marijuana? (Questions on marijuana are very frequent.)

There is no safe Tobacco. Smoking cigars and pipes and chewing tobacco all cause nicotine addiction, cancer of the mouth, lip, tongue, gums and throat, increase the risk for dying from cardiovascular disease and increase the likelihood of developing dental problems such as cavities, tooth loss and gum disease. The risk of lung cancer and COPD is decreased compared to cigarettes if the pipe and cigar smokers **don't** inhale their smoke but their environmental smoke around them is still inhaled.

Marijuana smoke contains much more carbon monoxide, tar and cancer causing chemicals than Tobacco smoke. It is inhaled deeper and held longer. Therefore puff for puff Marijuana is not safer than Cigarettes. Marijuana also causes acute impairment of mental function and coordination causing problems with school studies, work, driving and playing sports. (Also see references 7 and 8 and Handout.)

6. Do low-tar ("light"), additive-free or filter-tip cigarettes reduce health risk?

NO!

7. What are the hazards of breathing second-hand smoke?

Breathing second hand smoke is associated with the following hazards: In pregnant women, miscarriage; in infants and children; low birth weight, sudden infant death, impaired growth and development of lung function, respiratory infections, middle ear infections and asthma; in adults, wheezing, bronchitis, asthma, coronary heart disease, stroke and lung cancer. (see reference 4)

8. What about Black and Mild cigarillos with the "cancer stick" removed?

Removing the tobacco ("cancer stick") from a Black and Mild cigarillo and replacing it with marijuana is NOT safer. Removing the inner paper from the Black and Mild cigarillo (also thought to be carcinogenic by some uninformed individuals) is NOT safer.

9. If tobacco is so bad why is it legal?

If tobacco were made illegal now, there would be a huge black market (illegal purchases) from the millions of existing addicts. The better approach is to educate, motivate and prevent people (especially youths) from starting to use tobacco. Another reason tobacco is legal is that tobacco companies spend millions of dollars yearly to influence (lobby) politicians and, therefore, influence the laws that regulate them. If tobacco products became available today for the first time, governments would certainly not permit their sale!

10. Crossing a street is also a risk. You can be hit by a car!

What are the odds you'll get hit by a car, 1 in 10,000? What are the odds you'll die early and painfully from smoking cigarettes? 1 in 3 if you're smoking regularly before age 18; 1 in 2 if you become a long term smoker. **Not the same odds! (see reference 5)**

11. My parents smoke! My teacher smokes! Why shouldn't I?

Your parents and teacher may be addicted to nicotine and can't quit even though they want to. Do what they say and not what they do. Why not profit from their hard experience?

12. How long does it take to become addicted to tobacco?

From the time of first experimentation with tobacco it takes, on average, perhaps, 1-2 years to become addicted to nicotine. In some susceptible individuals, however, nicotine addiction can occur after days to weeks of first use (e.g. after smoking only 100 cigarettes)

13. How was the tar-stained handkerchief made?

See the Handout

14. Did you ever smoke?

Be honest and tell the truth. If you quit state why. If you never smoked state why.

Explode the following myths:

15. I can quit anytime I want.

Most teenagers who smoke regularly are already addicted to nicotine and can't quit even though they want to. Three out of four teenagers who smoke have made at least one serious yet unsuccessful effort to quit. On any given quit attempt, less than 5% of regular smokers successfully quit long term on their own. (see references 2 and 3)

16. It takes a long time to get addicted.

See question 12

17. Tobacco is not a drug and is less addicting than heroin or cocaine.

Explain the steps of becoming hooked on tobacco; increasing tolerance to nicotine requiring more and more for the same effect and withdrawal symptoms when you try to quit. These are the properties of an addicting drug. Experts in the field and many drug abusers state that Nicotine is **more addictive** than heroin or cocaine. Virtually all Health Agencies now classify nicotine addiction as a chronic disease with functional and structural correlates in the brain!

18. It only harms older people

See Handout. Health Consequences of Smoking in Teen and Preteens" and reference 2

19. Marijuana is safer.

See question 5. Also Handout and References 7 and 8

20. Low-tar, additive-free and filter-tip cigarettes are safer.

FALSE. Also see question 6

21. Most kids and adults smoke.

FALSE. See Handout

22 Males are at greater health risk from tobacco use than females.

Girls and women are at least as susceptible to all of the early and late health consequences of smoking as boys and men. There is some recent evidence that women may even be more susceptible to contracting lung cancer and emphysema from smoking.

23. Smoking makes me look cool!

Explain that smoking is now much less accepted by teens and most prefer to date non-smokers.

24. People who won't stop smoking are bad.

Explain that they are addicted and need help, not judgment. Most people who smoke regularly want to stop but can't.

REFERENCES:

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<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/tobaccocancer/questionsaboutsmokingtobaccoandhealth/questions-about-smoking-tobacco-and-health-toc>
2. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: Surgeon General's Report 2012 **(read fact sheet)**
<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/preventing-youth-tobacco-use/index.html>
3. How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease
Surgeon General's Report 2010 **(read fact sheet)**
<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/tobaccosmoke/index.html>
4. The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke:
Surgeon General's Report 2006 **(read chapter 1- conclusions, pgs 11-16)**
<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/secondhandsmoke/report-index.html>
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<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs339/en/>
6. Wiencke JK et al. Early age at smoking initiation and tobacco carcinogen DNA damage in the lung. Journal of the National Cancer Institute. April 7,1999: pages 614-19.
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7. Marijuana: Questions and Answers: Nebraska Department of Health

<http://www.answers4families.org/information-services/substance-abuse/drug-information/marijuana/marijuana-questions-and-answers>

8. Marijuana: Questions and Answers: National Institute on Drug Abuse

<http://health.usnews.com/health-news/articles/2008/04/25/10-questions-adolescents-have-about-marijuana>

9. Glossary of Medical Terms appearing in our Health-Science Video (illustrated)

<http://tobacco.mededu.miami.edu/tobacco/studyPlan/51.htm>

10. Comments by Educators and Middle School youths after viewing our Health-Science Video

<http://tobacco.mededu.miami.edu/tobacco/studyPlan/74.htm>