

The Benefits of Tobacco Cessation for Older People



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Smoking tobacco products is a deeply ingrained habit for many individuals, especially those of the older demographic. Research shows that the 45-64 age demographic carries the [highest percentage of smokers in the US](#) – 14.9%. There are also 8.3% of over 65s smoking – that's more than those under 24. There's no doubt about it, smoking is a habit the older generation struggles to kick

However, the negative health consequences associated with smoking are well-documented. While quitting smoking is beneficial at any age, it becomes increasingly important for people over 60 to give up tobacco products. There may be a train of thought that smoking for 40 years makes giving up after 60 pointless, but that couldn't be further from the truth.

The Benefits of Quitting

Reduced Risk of Chronic Diseases

Smoking is a leading cause of chronic diseases, including cardiovascular diseases, respiratory conditions, and certain types of cancer. By quitting smoking, individuals over 60 significantly

decrease their risk of developing these life-threatening illnesses. Research has shown that even long-term smokers who quit can experience a substantial reduction in the risk of heart attacks, strokes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), lung cancer, and other smoking-related diseases.

Improved Respiratory Function

Aging naturally brings about changes in lung function, and smoking exacerbates these changes. Quitting smoking can help improve lung function, enhance respiratory capacity, and reduce the risk of respiratory infections. For older people, maintaining healthy lung function is vital for an active and independent lifestyle.

Enhanced Cardiovascular Health

Smoking damages blood vessels increases blood pressure, and accelerates the formation of arterial plaque, leading to cardiovascular diseases. Improved circulation also means better oxygen and nutrient delivery to vital organs, which promotes overall well-being at a time when they may be under more strain due to natural aging.

Preservation of Cognitive Function

Smoking has been linked to an increased risk of cognitive decline and neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and dementia. Smokers can significantly reduce the risk of cognitive impairment and preserve their cognitive function as they age if they cease the habit. Studies have shown that quitting smoking can lead to improved memory, attention, and cognitive processing, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for older individuals.

Financial Savings

Life's later years see money slowly become tighter, especially in retirement when regular income stops. Smoking is an expensive habit, and quitting can lead to substantial savings. The money saved from not buying cigarettes can be put towards more enjoyable activities those in later life enjoy, such as travel.

How To Quit

There are many methods by which people chose to give up smoking, including abstinence. However, for those with long-term habits, finding a method that can be tailored to your specific needs is important. Smokers who have indulged in the habit for decades will almost certainly need to wean off nicotine slowly. There are plenty of modern approaches they can take.

Nicotine Pouches

Nicotine replacement therapy is certainly going to be a strong option, but not all NRTs will be suitable. For instance, older people are more likely to have dentures, and therefore gum may not suffice.

For those wanting an oral solution, nicotine pouches are a good choice. They fit into the mouth, between the gum and lip, and release a hit of nicotine over time. The [nicotine pouches on Prilla](#) include different strengths, such as 3mg and 6mg, which will allow you to tailor your cessation plan depending on how much you smoke. They also come in a range of flavors, such as cinnamon and mint, again making it a more bespoke process. Finally, they can be ordered and delivered to your door, making them convenient for older people with mobility issues.

Nicotine Patches

Patches, like pouches, release a small amount of nicotine into the body, but instead of orally, it is done through a transdermal patch that fits on the skin. Products such as [Equate nicotine patches](#) come in different strengths, 14mg and 21mg, to help wean smokers slowly from their habit. They last for longer, 24 hours usually, but they also have other benefits for older people.

A study by the University of Vermont College of Medicine showed that patches may improve cognition in older people with memory loss. Furthermore, [a study by Vanderbilt University Medical Center](#) suggests they could also help in the treatment of late-life depression, making patches a viable alternative to pouches for smoking cessation in the over 60s.

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