

Lifelines

from the National Cancer Institute



What the LGBT Community Should Know About Smoking and Cancer

By the National Cancer Institute

Tobacco use takes the lives of 40,000 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals each year, according to the American Cancer Society. Smoking is a major cause of many serious diseases, including cancer, heart disease, and stroke. And according to findings in a 2011 report from the Institute of Medicine, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender adults have higher rates of cigarette smoking than heterosexual adults.

Anytime is a good time to separate myth from fact when it comes to smoking and lung cancer. So what are the facts?

Here are three facts you should know:

1. **Smoking causes the majority of lung cancer cases.**
2. **The best way to prevent lung cancer is to not smoke.**
3. **Quitting smoking at any age greatly lowers the risk of lung cancer and other tobacco-related diseases.**

Here is the supporting evidence: About 90 percent of lung cancer cases in men and 80 percent of those in women are caused by smoking. Overall, smoking causes almost half a million premature deaths every year in the United States. Rates of smoking for LGBT individuals are, in many areas, higher than that of individuals who identify as heterosexual, putting them at increased risk for disease and death.

Are you looking for help in quitting smoking? The National Cancer Institute has several free resources to help you quit. You can connect with us by phone, via the web, via mobile apps, and via text messaging:

[Via Phone](#)

- The National Cancer Institute’s Smoking Quitline lets you talk for free with a smoking cessation counselor. You can call 1-877-44U-QUIT (1-877-448-7848) toll free within the United States, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time.
- 1-800-QUIT-NOW, another free quitline, can provide smoking cessation counseling, a personalized quit plan and self-help materials, and the latest information about medications to help you quit.
- To learn more about Quitlines, visit Smokefree.gov’s FAQ at: <http://www.smokefree.gov/quitlines-faq.aspx>

Via the Web

- On the Internet, NCI’s LiveHelp Online Chat (<https://livehelp.cancer.gov/>) allows you to get information and advice about quitting smoking through a confidential online chat with an information specialist from NCI’s Cancer Information Service, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Eastern Time.
- Find tools to help you quit on Smokefree.gov, including a step-by-step quit guide and facts about topics related to smoking cessation. www.Espanol.Smokefree.gov, www.Women.Smokefree.gov, and www.Teen.Smokefree.gov, which has a special LGBT smoking section (www.Teen.Smokefree.gov/LGBTsmoking.aspx) provide additional resources and tools for specific populations, including links to online support communities (<https://www.facebook.com/#!/smokefree.women?fref=ts> and <https://www.facebook.com/#!/SmokefreeTeen?fref=ts>).

Smartphones & Apps

- SmokefreeTXT (<http://smokefree.gov/smokefreetxt>) is a free text-messaging program that provides 24/7 encouragement, advice, and tips to help smokers stop smoking for good. The text program, which is available in Spanish and English, starts 2 weeks before your quit date and continues for 6 weeks following your quit date. (Note that normal carrier rates apply if you do not have unlimited text messaging.)
- A number of Smartphone apps to help users quit are available on Smokefree.gov (<http://www.smokefree.gov/apps/>). NCI QuitPal is an interactive app with proven quit strategies that users can use to set goals, track habits, view progress, and connect on social media. Teens can download QuitSTART, which delivers teen-friendly quit tips, mood management tools, and interactive games to help beat

tough cravings. The Smokefree QuitGuide app provides users with step-by-step quit information at their fingertips.

Your healthcare provider can also provide support, resources, and medications to help you quit smoking.

To learn more about lung cancer, visit the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Web site at www.cancer.gov (search term: lung) or call 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237). NCI has a wide variety of information on lung cancer risk, prevention, screening, treatment, clinical trials, and a host of other topics.

Follow this link to our June 18 Cyber-seminar on [Cultural Competency and LGBT Health Disparities: Identifying Barriers and Tailoring Strategies](#). You can also follow a separate link to view the archived videocast of a June 27 [NIH "Listening Session" on LGBT issues](#).

NCI leads the National Cancer Program and the NIH effort to dramatically reduce the burden of cancer and improve the lives of cancer patients and their families, through research into prevention and cancer biology, the development of new interventions, and the training and mentoring of new researchers. For more information about cancer, please visit the NCI web site at www.cancer.gov or call NCI's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237). More articles and videos in the culturally relevant Lifelines series are available at www.cancer.gov/lifelines.