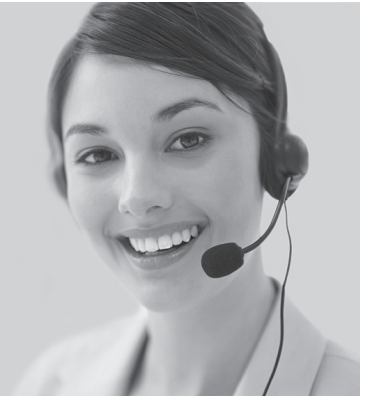


“It was great to talk with you.

Thank you for your interest in ‘Smoking and Your Blood Pressure.’ I hope you find this tip sheet helpful.

Please give me a call if you have more questions about this or other topics.

As your UPMC Health Plan health coach, I’m ready to help in any way I can.”



Smoking does not cause high blood pressure. But smoking is bad for anyone. It is especially bad if you have high blood pressure.

- Smoking injures the walls of your blood vessels. It speeds up the hardening of your arteries. This increases your risk for heart attack and stroke.
- The nicotine in tobacco can raise your blood pressure for up to an hour after you smoke. When you smoke throughout the day, your blood pressure may stay high.
- As a smoker, your risk of heart disease is two to four times higher than nonsmokers. And you are twice as likely to have a stroke.

What Do I Get If I Quit?

Many rewards come with quitting smoking. Check the examples below that are important to you.

- You will be able to taste, smell, and breathe better.
- You will enjoy having cleaner hair and fresher breath.
- You will also have more money for things you really want!
- You may enjoy “fitting in” better with the nonsmokers around you.
- You may like being a role model for young people.
- Many ex-smokers discover a new sense of freedom. It feels good not to have to satisfy the need to smoke.

All ex-smokers notice some of these pleasant changes soon after quitting. And these wonderful benefits are just the beginning!



A healthier life is on the line for you!

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There are many other rewards to look forward to when you quit. Most of these relate to your health and being able to enjoy life in the years to come. The rewards of staying quit get bigger and better as time goes on. For example:

- Your breathing ability and energy level will get better and better.
- Your smoker's cough will go away for good.
- You will be likely to catch fewer colds.
- Your risk of heart attack, lung disease, and many cancers will continue to decrease the longer you stay quit.
- You will be likely to live longer and to have fewer health problems as an ex-smoker. And that's great news!

Take Action

Talk with your UPMC Health Plan health coach when you are ready to quit smoking. The UPMC Health Plan has many resources you can use.

One is the UPMC MyHealth Ready to Quit™ program, which includes the tools and skills needed to get ready, quit, and stay quit for good. It teaches you how to cope when you have an urge to smoke, including when you are under stress. It also teaches you how to get rid of urges and cravings to smoke over time.

Ask your health coach about a personal quit plan—one that will work best for you.



A healthier life is on the line for you!

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