

Chronic Kidney Disease and Smoking

Why should I quit smoking?

Smoking is considered the number one preventable cause of premature death in the United States. People who smoke are at higher risk of developing many chronic health problems, including heart disease, heart attack, stroke, peripheral artery disease and blood clots. This is especially important because these chronic disorders are all part of the bigger picture of **cardiovascular disease — the number one cause of hospitalization and death in patients with chronic kidney disease**. Smoking also increases the risk for many types of cancers, including lung, colorectal and liver, to name a few.

Why does this happen?

Smoking causes a number of changes throughout the body, including the build-up of fatty substances in blood vessels, decreased oxygen levels due to carbon monoxide and cell damage from inflammation and oxidative stress. Smoking also causes blood pressure and heart rate to go up, leading to a higher risk of heart attack and stroke. Finally, **smoking worsens kidney damage due to diabetes**.

How can I reduce my risk?

Quitting smoking is hard work, but it is the first step in reducing risks for the problems listed above. In addition, the risk for heart disease may be reduced by:

- lowering blood cholesterol
- lowering blood pressure
- being more physically active
- losing weight
- preventing/controlling diabetes

Can smoking affect my kidney transplant?

It is well known that smoking narrows blood vessels in the legs, arms, heart and kidneys. Smoking has been shown to lead to an increased possibility of your body rejecting the new kidney, and it is associated with worse outcomes, including death and early failure of the transplanted kidney. If you are considering kidney transplantation or have received a kidney transplant, you should not be smoking.

Tips to quit smoking.

Even though it may be difficult, many people who quit smoking are surprised by how good they actually feel. Here are a few tips to help quit smoking:

Set a quit date.

Tell family, friends and coworkers that you plan to quit.

Anticipate and plan for the challenges you'll face while quitting. Learn about your smoking triggers, including stress, seeing others smoke, finishing a meal or others.

Remove cigarettes and other tobacco products from your home, car and work.

Talk to your doctor about getting help to quit.

Visit www.smokefree.gov for more tips.

Significant health benefits begin minutes after quitting smoking and continue for years. For example, after one year, your risk of heart disease is reduced by half.

Includes information from the American Heart Association and smokefree.gov.