

Tobacco

Tobacco products are full of chemicals that harm our health. We can reduce our risk of breast cancer by avoiding tobacco smoke.

Science Summary

Tobacco smoke and secondhand smoke is a toxic mixture of chemicals and gas. Of the more than 7,000 chemicals in tobacco smoke, at least 250 are known to be harmful. Among those 250 chemicals, at least 69 are linked to cancer. Aromatic amines and 1,3 butadiene are examples

of tobacco smoke compounds that increase the risk of breast cancer. Scientific evidence suggests both active smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke may lead to increased breast cancer risk.



What can I do for my own body and health?

Do your best to steer clear of cigarettes, tobacco products, and vaping altogether. The risk of breast cancer increases with both the duration and intensity of smoking. If you already smoke, the earlier in your life you quit, the lower your risk becomes. If you need help quitting, there are available resources.

What can I do to support the health of my family and friends, and my community?

Minimizing exposure to cigarette smoke, including secondhand and thirdhand smoke, is crucial. Talk to loved ones, especially kids, about smoking and breast cancer risk. Support groups for quitting can be a great way to build community in a non-judgmental space.

Often, smoking is a way to cope with stress, so understanding underlying stressors is important. Offer to help your loved ones kick the habit, explore quitting aids, provide healthful distractions, and celebrate milestones in their quitting journey.

How can I navigate and get support with any systemic barriers to my health?

Tobacco use is highest among certain groups, including people of color, LGBTQ individuals, and rural residents. These communities often face systemic barriers that make it difficult to quit smoking, including lack of access to healthcare and counseling, high treatment cost, targeted advertisements, higher stress

levels, and peer pressure. Women also face stressors that drive them to smoke, such as lack of access to healthy, affordable food, unsafe neighborhoods, and insufficient wages to support their families.

Look into your local or state government programs that help people stop smoking. Many states offer free telephone-based quitlines staffed by trained counselors (e.g., California Smokers' Helpline). State health insurance and community health centers may offer low-cost or free tobacco cessation support. Online support programs and mobile tools can provide resources and a community of like-minded individuals.

How can I help advocate for and support systemic change to remove barriers to health?

Overall, it is more effective to prevent people from starting to smoke than it is to help people stop smoking. We can greatly reduce smoking in our communities by focusing on youth and implementing school-based interventions to prevent children and young adults from starting to smoke.



Reach out to state representatives to ban tobacco sales, including vaping products, in all California pharmacies.



Work with local, county, and tribal governments to ban tobacco product advertising that targets youth and communities of color.



Advocate for information about tobacco use and breast cancer risk in the California K-12 public school tobacco-prevention curriculum.



Require all public and private colleges in California to adopt 100% tobacco-free and vape-free campus policies.



Create culturally tailored anti-smoking and anti-vaping messages with, and for, youth and communities of color.



Support campaigns that create, fund, and promote culturally tailored smoking cessation programs that are accessible online, by phone, and by text.



Learn more and get involved.

**TOGETHER, WE CAN
MAKE CHANGE!**

Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (BCPP) is the leading science-based advocacy organization working to prevent breast cancer by eliminating our exposure to toxic chemicals and other environmental exposures linked to the disease.



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