

Stop Smoking to Improve Your Heart Health



Smoking is a major factor for heart diseases causing 1 in 4 deaths. Quit smoking now to reduce your risk of hypertension (high blood pressure).

What are the facts?

- Smoking increases your risk of heart disease such as high blood pressure/hypertension and high cholesterol
- Smoking increases your risk of having a stroke by 2-4 times
- Smoking increases your risk of damaging your blood vessels
- Smoking causes 80% of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) related deaths. Patients with COPD have a high risk of developing hypertension.

Why should I quit smoking?

Quitting smoking will reduce your risk for hypertension.

- **1-2 years after you quit:** Risk of heart attack drops
- **3-6 years after you quit:** Risk of heart disease drops by 50%
- **5-10 years after you quit:** Risk of having a stroke drops
- **15 years:** Risk of heart disease is like a non-smoker

What can I do to stop the urge to smoke after I have quit?

Quitting smoking will reduce your risk for hypertension.

- **Delay** the urge to smoke. Try counting to 10, the urge will usually pass in 3-5 min
- **Distract** by doing something else. Take your mind off smoking by talking to a friend, going for a walk, or listening to music
- **Deep Breaths.** Count to 5 and breathe in slowly and deeply so your stomach expands. Repeat 4 to 5 times.
- **Drink water** and hold it in your mouth for a few minutes. This can help you relax.

Resources:

- **MA State Quit Line:** 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)
- [Mass.gov: Take the First Step](#)
- [CHA Lung Cancer Screening](#)
- [American College of Cardiology Risk Estimator](#)
- [American Heart Association: Smoking and High Blood Pressure](#)

Scan the QR code to learn more.

