

Your guide to... healthy living

This issue is all about
how to give up smoking



The Smoking Issue

*It's never too late
to QUIT!*

READ HOW MADODA KICKED THE HABIT...

At the age of 14, Madoda and his pals smoked their first cigarettes 'just to see what it was like'. The guys all coughed and felt a bit dizzy, but they decided it was cool. They continued to smoke, using the money their parents gave them for school lunches to buy cigarettes.

By 16, Madoda was heavily addicted to cigarettes. So addicted, in fact, that if he did not have a cigarette every thirty minutes, he would feel sick. A smoke was the last thing he had before he went to sleep and the first thing he reached for when he woke up in the morning. He often even got up during the night to have a cigarette. Usually, he was a pack-a-day smoker, but he could easily finish three packets of cigarettes, if he was drinking and partying as well. He gave up playing soccer around this time because he often had a cough and felt pains in his chest. "I didn't see it as an addiction then", says the quietly spoken Madodo, who is now 41 years old. "I didn't understand, even though people would tell me this thing was not right. They would talk about how

smoking causes heart disease and cancer, but I never saw anyone with cancer and heart problems, so I didn't really believe them."

But when his chest pains and coughing fits became more severe, he started to get worried. His girlfriend pleaded with him to stop smoking. Madoda then read some articles in the newspaper about smoking and health. What shocked him into action were some pictures of lungs damaged by smoking - they were shriveled and blackened with the tar from cigarettes. He couldn't give up entirely in one go, but he began cutting down. He sucked sweets to cope with the nicotine cravings that he experienced as he began smoking less.

In 2000, Madoda joined a gym at the local community centre. It was a decision which would change his life. He found that he really enjoyed pushing weights, although he experienced pain in his lungs when he did too much. He was still smoking, though not like before. At first, he 'gymed' once a week, twice at the most.

"I then decided I wanted to get really fit. I knew that in order to



"I decided I wanted to get really fit. I knew that in order to do this, I had to give up smoking completely. I wanted to repair those lungs!"

Story continued on page 3 



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Get updated on the latest information, pick up some useful tips and read interesting personal stories about how others have managed to achieve their health goals.

There are a lot of good reasons to stop smoking



The poisons in tobacco smoke:

- **Nicotine** – the addictive drug in tobacco
- **Carbon monoxide** – the poisonous gas found in car exhaust fumes
- **Tar** – the sticky, brown substance that stains your teeth and fingertips. Someone who smokes 20 cigarettes a day inhales about a full cup of tar every year.
- **Ammonia** – a chemical found in toilet cleaner
- **Arsenic** – a poison used to kill rats
- **Acetone** – a chemical found in nail polish remover
- **DDT** – a well-known insecticide
- **Cyanide** – a poison also found in car batteries

Smoking causes many different health problems

- Lung cancer
- Emphysema (breathing problems caused by the destruction of air sacs in the lungs)
- Chronic bronchitis (coughing caused by damage to the lining of the lungs)
- Bladder cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Acute myeloid leukemia
- Cancer of the mouth
- Cancer of the voice box
- Cancer of the throat
- Cancer of the oesophagus
- Cervical cancer
- Pancreatic cancer
- Stomach cancer
- Heart attacks
- Stroke
- Angina
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm (weakening of the main artery or blood vessel of the body where it runs through the abdomen)
- Cataracts in the eyes
- Gum disease
- Osteoporosis (brittle bone disease)
- Impotence in men
- Infertility
- Heartburn
- Ulcers (sores in the stomach)
- Crohn's disease (inflammation of the intestine causing pain and diarrhea)
- Increased risks of complications if you have diabetes or hypertension
- Increased risk of getting TB and dying from TB



Healthy lung



Smoker's lung

Overall, about half of all smokers die from tobacco related diseases. The good news is that quitting works. If you manage to quit before you develop any of these serious diseases, you can avoid most of the risk. If you already have an illness, quitting can still help you avoid further damage, live longer and enjoy a better quality of life.

do this, I had to give up smoking completely. I wanted to repair those lungs!” Over time, he stopped going out with his friends who drank and smoked, and started to socialize with the guys at the gym. This helped him finally stop smoking. He also decided to tell his mother what was going on so that she could support him.

Amongst his friends and neighbours, he is the exception: “More and more people who previously did not smoke – young women, for example – are taking up the habit”, says Madoda.

Now, like the boys, they see smoking as a sign of sophistication and maturity, although, unlike the boys, girls seldom smoke in public. They know that their elders will scold them more than they do the boys.

Nowadays, Madoda goes to the gym five days a week, working out for about two hours each session. He uses the machines and weights, and he boxes.

“I can now hold my breath for a long time, without feeling any pain. When I run now, I don’t feel like I swallowed a match!”

“I am much stronger and fitter now and I really like the feeling. The guys at the gym ask me: ‘Is there something you are using to give you this strength – like some kind of supplement?’ I feel so proud when I say ‘No!’”

Madoda’s determination to quit smoking came from within. He listened to the signs that he was destroying his own body by his actions.

He only needed a couple of prods – from his girlfriend, and from a photo of a smoker’s lungs – to make the decision to quit smoking and to live a healthy, more rewarding life.❤️

As soon as you stop smoking, your body starts to heal itself and your risk of getting a serious disease decreases.

Few people say that quitting is easy, but everyone who has given up, says the effort is worth it.

Other reasons to quit

- **Smoking costs a lot of money.** Work out how much money you would save if you quit. This might motivate you to take the decision to give up once and for all.
- **Smoke gets into your hair,** stains your teeth and makes your breath smell bad.
- Because smoking reduces the blood flow to the skin, **smokers get more wrinkles** than non-smokers.
- **Addiction to nicotine is stressful.** Many people think that cigarettes help them relax and calm down, but smoking actually only calms the craving for the addictive drug in tobacco – nicotine. Soon after smoking a cigarette, the body and brain want more nicotine. This makes smokers feel irritable and tense until they get their next cigarette. If you quit, you will be free of this stress and feel satisfied that you have gained more control over your life.
- **Smoking during pregnancy can cause miscarriage,** stillbirth and premature labour. It can also affect the baby’s growth and damage its lungs.



- **Your smoking can harm those around you.** Adults who live with smokers can get allergies, asthma and headaches from breathing in other people’s smoke. They are also at risk of developing lung cancer and heart disease in the long term.
- Babies and children who breathe in cigarette smoke at home are more likely to get asthma, pneumonia, coughs and colds, ear infections and meningitis. **If you quit, you will be protecting your family from the harm of passive smoking.**

Hookah pipes

(Hubbly Bubbliies)

Many people believe that hookah pipes are less harmful to health than smoking cigarettes or other pipes. This is not true.

The water does not ‘clean’ the smoke. Hookah smoke has the same poisons as the ordinary smoke you get directly from a cigarette. It is therefore just as dangerous to your health. In addition, sharing a hookah pipe with other people puts you at risk of getting TB and other germs.❤️





Read all about what happened to Loren's mom and the wake-up call she got which shocked her into giving up smoking...

“How much do you smoke?” asked the doctor. “Sometimes 15 a day,” she replied.

The doctor then said the words which she has never forgotten:

“Keep doing that, and you are going to die young.”

In 2008, Loren was 28 years old and sharing a home in Athlone with her mom. Gwendeline, Loren's mom, worked in the creditors department at Clicks in town. Loren also had a good job - as an aftercare worker at a nearby school. Things were going well. But all that changed one day in April of that year. Her mother, who was 56 years old at the time, had a major stroke. When the doctors told her she would never be able to work again, Loren had to quit her job too so that she could take care of her mother. It was the beginning of a new life for both of them.

Both mother and daughter were smokers. Loren remembers the doctor who was caring for her mother while she was in hospital, asking her if she smoked;

“Yes, I smoke” said her mother.

How much, asked the doctor.

“Sometimes 15 a day” replied her mother.

The doctor then said the words

which Loren's mother has never forgotten: “Keep doing that, and you are going to die sooner than you'd like”.

Like her husband, who had died of heart failure at 66, Gwendeline suffers from high blood pressure. Her husband had smoked right up until the day he died, and Gwendeline smoked a pack a day until the day she had her stroke in 2008. She had developed high blood pressure at the early age of 26. She says that she does not recall the doctors warning her about the dangers of smoking at the time. She did not know that smoking was dangerous for people with high blood pressure because it raised their blood pressure. And although she had been prescribed medication for her condition, she admits that she often neglected to take her pills. She often struggled to walk more than a few metres at a time. Getting herself from the bus stop to the office was, “like a nightmare”, she says.

Despite seeing her mother's battle with hypertension and ill-health, Loren started smoking at age 11. When Gwendeline found out Loren was smoking, there was little she could say to her daughter.

Thinking back to what the doctor had said to her mother about smoking, Loren recalls that the doctor had also wanted to know if anyone else in the house smoked. When Gwendeline had replied that Loren did, the doctor went on to explain the dangers of passive smoking.

“I realised then, that I would also have to give it up,” recalls Loren.

Gwendeline succeeded in giving up smoking immediately and says she has never looked back. But, it took Loren a little longer to kick the habit. Although she had smoked less than her mom - 6 or 7 cigarettes a day - she was still addicted. Months went by, until one day Loren found herself without cigarettes:

“It was a Sunday and all the shops were closed. I thought to

myself, 'How am I going to get through this?' Then, I thought, 'This is my opportunity!'" She knew that if she picked up a cigarette after a whole night of not smoking, it would make her feel sick. So, she decided to go cold turkey. No preparation. Loren believes that this is the only way she could have done it.

She remembers that she experienced withdrawal symptoms, like sweating a lot and having a dry mouth. Her cravings started almost immediately. At first, she replaced nicotine with caffeine from coffee. However, as she also had high blood pressure like her mother, she knew that coffee was not a good substitute in the long term. Eventually, she settled on drinking rooibos tea.

When asked what the benefits of quitting have been for her, Loren is quick to agree with her mother that it has been worth it to stop. We save a lot of money by not smoking any more... which is important, because we now rely on my mom's disability pension, which as you can imagine is not a lot. I also earn a bit selling perfumes from home."

Loren says that the most important effect on her health, apart from generally feeling more energetic, is that she no longer gets colds.

"When I smoked, I would get a cold every other month. My sinuses were messed up and I always felt groggy. It took about four months, but then I realised one day that this was not a problem anymore," she says.

The other thing that has changed in their lives is their diet. They explained that they no longer have salt in food, and that they have cut down on red meat. They eat more vegetables and fish and feel much better for it. For Loren, the big problem with quitting was that she put on weight. She found that she ate more to deal with her cravings. She does not eat as much these days- and eats more healthily - but she has not gone back to her previous weight. She says she doesn't mind too much. She was thin, she says because smoking took away her appetite - and that isn't healthy.

Both Loren and her mom admit that without the stroke, followed by the doctor's plain speaking about smoking, neither of them would have given up. Loren's love and concern for her mother forced her to stop her habit. Now their home is smoke-free. Visitors know that, if they want to smoke, they must go outside. It has now been several years since the stroke and Gwendeline can easily do the 20 minute walk to her church and back home without feeling breathless.

Loren concludes by saying:

"Imagine walking up a steep mountain... if you're a smoker, you are going to be gasping for air. Whereas, if you are a non-smoker, you can climb to the top with ease. Not only are you going to make it, but when you get there, you can jump for joy too!" ❤️



**If you quit smoking,
you will also be a
good role model
for your children.
Research shows that
if a child's parents
smoke, they are
more likely to start
smoking when they
are teenagers.**



“Since I quit, when I wake up, I feel fresh, and my wife says that it’s so much better kissing me now!”

Remember it is never too late to quit smoking. Stopping smoking at any age, adds years to your life.



Read about how Rishaad eventually quit at the age of 53 after **9 HEART ATTACKS!**

For a long time, Rishaad worked in the lab in the Cardiac Department at the University of Cape Town. So, he knew very well that smoking caused heart disease. But, he had smoked since he was 14 and did not seriously think about quitting. But, smoking soon took its toll on his health.

By the time he was 53 years old, Rishaad, had suffered nine, light heart attacks. Every time he was in hospital, he would try to act on his doctor’s advice and stop smoking. But he would always end up starting again.

In October 2010, he suffered his worst heart attack. His heart went into full on failure. Having had so

many heart attacks before, he knew the symptoms – pain in the chest or arm, shortness of breath. He knew he had to get himself to hospital very urgently. Luckily, he got there in time for the doctors to save his life.

But since the heart attack in 2010, his heart’s functioning has been reduced by half, making it impossible to have a bypass. He lives with the knowledge that he could have another heart attack at any time.

So, why did he not quit smoking? Why did he ever start? “I started smoking to fit in when I was young,” Rishaad replies. “I wanted to belong to a particular group of friends and

that is what they were all doing at the time”.

When, as an adult, he worked at the medical school, he remembers the professor at the Cardiac Department advising him to stop smoking. “But I ignored the Professor’s advice. I told myself that because I played soccer and jogged, I would stay fit. I kind of thought, it would never happen to me. As a smoker, you avoid thinking through the possible consequences. The truth was, I was so addicted to cigarettes that I just could not face giving up.”

After 10 long years, Rishaad did eventually manage to give up smoking. He has been completely

free of cigarettes for several years now. "It's a very addictive drug," Rishaad says. "I honestly believe it is as bad as tik. The government should ban it.

Rishaad can no longer work. He lives off his pension. His wife stays at home to take care of him, since he cannot be left alone for too long. Things are tough financially, but Rishaad counts his blessings.

Since quitting, he feels healthier. He can now walk about 150 metres, and every day, he exercises his arms and legs while sitting down. He believes his body is slowly starting to repair some of the damage done by smoking. The family also eats much more healthily now. They have cut down on fat, salt and sugar.

He says he feels proud of himself. "And," he adds, "there are other benefits to being a non-smoker: when I wake up, I feel fresh, and my wife says that it's so much better kissing me now!" ❤️

"I do feel proud that I eventually quit. I was lucky to be given another chance"



The benefits of quitting



No matter how long you have been smoking, you will feel the benefits of quitting immediately, as your body begins to clean itself.

Within 12 hours:

Blood pressure drops, the amount of oxygen in your blood increases and circulation improves to your hands and feet. Your chances of getting a heart attack begin to go down.

Within one day:

The poisonous gas, carbon monoxide, leaves your body. Your lungs begin to work better.

Within two days:

Nicotine is no longer in your body. Your sense of taste and smell improves and your breath, hair and teeth are cleaner.

Within three days:

You can do more before running out of breath and you have more energy.

After 2-12 weeks:

Blood circulation improves throughout your body. It will be easier to walk up stairs and do exercise.

After 3 months:

The tiny hairs, called cilia, which clean your lungs begin to grow back and remove the phlegm or mucus and tar that have collected there.

After one year:

You have less risk of developing lung cancer and heart disease.

Do you want to quit, but worry that you can't?

You might really want to quit, but worry that you lack the willpower. Think about what could give you more confidence. Here are some suggestions which may help:

- Think of past difficulties or challenges in your life and how you have managed to overcome or cope with them. Think about what you learnt from these experiences and the personal qualities you have, that helped you get through them.
- Talk to someone you know who has succeeded in quitting and ask them for their support and advice.
- Speak to a doctor or nurse at your local clinic and ask for their help.
- Speak to a pharmacist about nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). NRT makes quitting easier because it helps reduce the cravings people usually experience when they stop smoking.



Join the free "Kick Butt with CANSA" online quitting smoking support programme:

Website:
<http://www.ekickbutt.org.za>

If you decide to quit...

- **Set a Quit Date.** Once you have made a firm decision to quit, commit yourself to stop smoking completely by a specific date. Mark this date in your diary or on a calendar.
- **Think ahead** about what kinds of problems you may experience in trying to quit and how you can solve them.
- **Get support** from family and friends.
- While you are trying to quit, **avoid** socialising with smokers and stay away from situations which will make you want to smoke.
- When you feel the craving for a cigarette, **distract yourself** by: taking up a new hobby; doing housework or cooking; doing a crossword; knitting; going for a walk around the neighbourhood; visiting a friend; praying; cleaning your teeth or drinking ice-cold water.
- **Stock up on nice things** to munch on, for example, cut up fruit and veggies, sugarfree chewing gum, dried fruits and nuts.
- **Consider using nicotine replacement therapy** (NRT). Various options (sprays, gum and patches) are available at any pharmacy without a prescription.



Quitting Smoking THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

If you are serious about quitting, ask your healthcare provider for the comprehensive guide on **Quitting Smoking**, which goes with this leaflet. This guide will give you more useful information and take you through a step-by-step programme to stop smoking. Many people have successfully quit using this guide. **It could also help you!**

Good Luck!!



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NEED SUPPORT TO QUIT?

Remember there is professional help on the other end of the phone, if you phone the

Cancer Association Quitline on
0800 22 66 22

(free call)
9am-4pm

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