

World Woman's Christian Temperance Union

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Dear White Ribbon Sisters,

To develop knowledge is a wonderful thing. As members of the WCTU we have a unique opportunity to share with others, facts on the adverse effects that alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs have on the body.

The Education Department is an important part of the WCTU programme. Therefore I encourage you to take time to study the material being sent so that you can effectively pass on the knowledge gained for the health and well-being of others.

I am looking forward to sharing with you in this important task.

Dawn Giddings

Materials included for the Education Department

- 1) Convention speech on TOBACCO by Tore Sanner, Ph.D.
- 2) Unborn Babies
- 3) Young People and Smoking
- 4) Women and Smoking
- 5) Convention Education Workshop

SMOKING HARMS UNBORN BABIES

Smoking during pregnancy reduces the growth and health of babies and increases the risks of a number of complications and illnesses for both the mother and the baby/ Babies born to women who smoke during pregnancy have a greater chance of premature birth, low birth weight, still birth, and infant mortality. Smoking during pregnancy can also affect the development of babies' lungs which increases the risk for many health problems.

Nicotine and other chemicals in tobacco smoke are passed onto the baby through the placenta. Nicotine causes the blood vessels to constrict which decreases the amount of oxygen going to the unborn baby and is an important contributor to low birth weight. Low birth rate is a leading cause of infant death and an important risk factor for a number of health problems and complications in infancy and childhood. Smoking during any stage of pregnancy increases the risk of premature birth. Mothers who smoke also pass nicotine onto their babies through their breast milk.

Mothers who smoke are 50% more likely to have a stillborn baby compared to mothers who do not smoke. Babies born to mothers who smoke before and after birth are three times more likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

[Source: Australian Government, Department of Health and Ageing]



Young People and Smoking: the Fact File



Nicotine is highly addictive

Many people who start smoking think they will be able to stop whenever they want but then discover just how difficult it is to give up.

Did you know...

- One in two recreational users will become addicted.
- Smoking is more addictive than heroin, cocaine or alcohol.
- Up to 90% of smokers begin smoking before the age of 19.
- Young people are twice as likely to smoke if they have one or more parents who smoke.
- Symptoms of addiction (having strong urges to smoke, feeling anxious or irritable, feelings of depression, having unsuccessfully tried to not smoke) can appear within weeks or only days after becoming an 'occasional' smoker.
- Almost 50% of all urban litter is tobacco-related.

Statistics on young people & smoking

- The 2002 Australian Secondary School Students Survey found the proportion of students who were current smokers (smoked in the 7 days preceding the survey) increased from 6% among 12 year olds to 25% among 17 year olds.
- The proportion of students smoking in the previous week almost doubled between the ages of 13(7%) and 14 (13%).
- It is estimated that 205,259 students were currently involved with tobacco smoking in that they had smoked at least one cigarette in the week prior to the study.

The health effect: serial killer

Smoking has a cancerous or contaminating effect on every single organ or system in the human body.

- More than 19,000 Australians die prematurely each year from smoking.
- Smoking is a slow way to die. The effects on your body can cause years of suffering.
- One in two smokers will die prematurely of smoking related illness and disease.
- Smoking causes more sickness than any other drug in Australia.
- People who smoke are more susceptible to colds and flu, infections and asthma.
- Smoking can cause blindness, mouth, throat and/or lung cancer.
- Smoking doubles the risk of stroke and increases the risk of heart attack.
- Smoking causes 80% of lung cancers.
- Non-smokers have a 20%-30% higher risk of heart disease and lung cancer if they spend time around smokers. This risk increases with increased exposure to tobacco smoke.
- Second hand smoke is particularly harmful to babies.
- Children of parents who smoke inhale about the same amount of nicotine as if they were smoking 60-150 cigarettes a year.

Smoking effects on your body

Smoking affects many parts of the body, both inside and outside. Some of the effects happen straight away and others take longer to occur:

- The tar in cigarettes collects on teeth, fingers and fingernails; staining them yellowish-brown.

- People who smoke age prematurely as wrinkles develop around the eyes and mouth sooner than in non-smokers.
- Smoking can also cause halitosis (bad breath) and hair loss.
- Smoking contributes to lowered fertility in both men and women.
- Smoking reduces fitness and people who smoke are less likely to participate in sports and physical activity.

Mind if I don't smoke

If you are tempted to smoke or already smoke here's some strategies next time you feel like lighting up. Fighting the craving feeling does get easier.

- Call the Quitline on 131 848 to get the Quit book sent to you, or go to the Quit because you can book on-line <http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/quitnow/quitbook/index2.htm>
- Use the Quitbook's 4Ds model to help you cope: delay, drink water, deep breathe, and do something else.
- Do try to eat healthy foods and get some extra exercise.
- Visit a GP who can support you in quitting or not starting smoking.
- Recognise that social pressures may impact on your choice to, or not to, smoke. Get help and support from family and friends.
- Quitting smoking is a challenge and helps you believe in yourself and take on other challenges.
- Once you have been successful in quitting, find new ways to deal with stress and difficult emotions.
- Be proud of saying 'No thanks'.

The benefits of quitting

- Quitting will improve your overall health.
- Changes from quitting begin within a few hours and many smokers notice improvements in their skin and sense of taste and smell in as little as a week.
- Cutting out one \$10 pack a day, could save \$3,650 in a year or \$70 a week leaving more money to spend on yourself.

- Helping our environment by not contributing to the damage and pollution created by tobacco waste.

Tobacco and the law

- Legislative changes are moving towards total smoking bans in all public places, tough penalties for retailers who sell cigarettes to children and young people under 18, and greater restrictions on cigarette advertising.
- Explicit graphic warnings on cigarette packs and other tobacco products will be introduced in 2006 to fully inform consumers and in particular, alert young people to the dangers of smoking.

Useful resources

- Kids Help Line 1800 55 1800 www.kidshelp.com.au/
- National Quit line 131 848
- National Tobacco Campaign www.quitnow.info.au/
- OxyGen –Resources for Young People on smoking - www.oxygen.org.au
- Reachout – helping young people help themselves - www.reachout.com.au
- REDI - a school drug resource kit <http://www.redi.gov.au/>
- Beyondblue – national depression initiative – campaign for young people at www.ybblue.com.au/

Key research sources

- Australian Secondary Students Alcohol and Drug Survey 2002.
- National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2001 AIHW www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/8227
- The Quantification of Drug-caused Mortality and Morbidity in Australia, AIHW 1998 www.aihw.gov.au/publications/phe/qdcmma98/index.html
- QUIT - Cancer Council Victoria www.quit.org.au/
- Social Costs of Drug Abuse in 1998 and 1992, National Drug Strategy Monograph 30, Collins & Lapsley, 1996 www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/publications/monographs.htm
- Tobacco in Australia; Facts and Issues, 1995 www.quit.org.au/quit/FandI/welcome.htm



Women and Smoking



In 1998, an estimated 6,075 women died in Australia as a result of cigarette smoking, approximately 10 per cent of all deaths. While the proportion of all deaths caused by cigarette smoking has declined in men, it has increased in women.

Females' smoking rates peaked in 1976 and have declined since then. A slow decline continues as shown by the 2001 *National Drug Strategy Household Survey*, which indicated that the number of females aged 14 years over who smoke daily has declined by 1.6% since the 1998 survey (19.6% to 18.0%).

Lung cancer accounts for the largest proportion of smoking related deaths among women (25 per cent). Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (22 per cent) and ischaemic heart disease (20 per cent) also account for large proportions of smoking related deaths.

Smoking related diseases in Australian women account for almost half of the years of healthy life lost due to premature death, impairment and disability.

Smoking and Pregnancy

Smoking during pregnancy increases the risks for both the woman and the baby. The desire to become pregnant and pregnancy itself are powerful motivational factors for women to stop smoking. Approximately 20-30% of women quit when they become pregnant, but about 70% of these women relapse either during pregnancy or after the baby is born.

When a pregnant woman smokes carbon monoxide and nicotine passes into her unborn baby's bloodstream through the placenta – just as if the baby was smoking too. This means the baby gets less oxygen and may not develop as well as it should. Nicotine also increases a baby's heart rate and breathing movements.

Smoking while pregnant increases the risk of many problems including miscarriage, premature birth, placental complications and doubles a woman's risk of giving birth to a baby with a low birth weight. Babies born with a lower-than-average birth weight are more susceptible to infections and other health problems. Babies whose mother smokes also have a higher risk of developing respiratory problems, middle ear infections, asthma and sudden infant death syndrome.

After a baby is born, the poisons inhaled through cigarettes are passed on to the baby through breast milk and through passive smoking.

Smoking may also make it harder to conceive. Women who smoke often take longer to fall pregnant and have a higher chance of ectopic pregnancy and miscarriage.

Smoking Initiation

The age of smoking initiation is an important indicator of future smoking behaviour. Over the last 50 years, women have been taking up smoking at younger ages. People who start smoking when they are young are:

- more likely to smoke heavily;
- to become more dependent on nicotine; and
- to be at increased risk for smoking-related illnesses or death.

Other factors that can contribute to smoking initiation and continuation are:

- transitional factors such as moving out of the family home to more independent living arrangements and having greater autonomy over lifestyle choices;
- late adoption of smoking was strongly associated with binge drinking of alcohol;

- depressive disorders are more prevalent in smokers than non smokers and they are less successful at quitting than smokers who have not experienced major depression;
- stress is a predictor of smoking, women with higher stress scores are subsequently more likely to take up smoking; and
- weight control.

Smoking and Indigenous Women

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) adults are almost twice as likely to smoke as non-ATSI adults. Smoking rates vary between communities and with age but overall is about 55% for men and 30% for women. The average age that ATSI people start smoking is 15 years, which is younger than the general population. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people also experience higher mortality from a number of smoking-related diseases, compared to the general Australian population. Smoking among Indigenous women during pregnancy is very common with rates of up to 72% reported.

Quitting

There is little difference in the perception of advantages of quitting between women and men, with both sexes indicating 'saving money' and 'feeling healthier' as the main advantages. There are, however, significant differences between women and men in their perception of the disadvantages of quitting. Overall, women perceive the disadvantage of quitting smoking more than men, especially in relation to weight gain.

Health benefits of cessation

Nearly all smokers are aware that smoking is damaging their health, but may have fairly limited knowledge about the diversity of adverse effects. They are not all aware that most of the adverse health effects from smoking decline rapidly after quitting.

12 HOURS

Almost all the nicotine has been metabolised.

24 HOURS

Blood levels of carbon monoxide have dropped dramatically.

5 DAYS

Most nicotine by-products have been removed. Sense of taste and smell improve.

6 WEEKS

Risk of wound infection after surgery substantially reduced.

3 MONTHS

Cilia begin to recover and lung function improves.

1 YEAR

Risk of coronary heart disease is halved after one year compared to continuing smokers.

10 YEARS

Risk of lung cancer is less than half that of a continuing smoker and continues to decline.

15 YEARS

Risk of coronary heart disease the same as a non-smoker. 10 to 15 years after quitting the all-cause mortality in former smokers declines to the same level as people who have never smoked.

OTHER BENEFITS

- Women who quit before or in the early months of pregnancy have the same risk of having a low birthweight baby as women who have never smoked.
- Stopping smoking slows the rate of loss of lung capacity in chronic airway disease.
- Improved appearance of skin and fitness.
- Saves money – based on one \$10 pack of cigarettes per day in 1 year the cost is \$3,650 and over 5 years \$18,250.

Sources

- 1 McDermott L, Russel A, Dobson A. *Cigarette Smoking among Women in Australia*, National Tobacco Strategy 1999 – 2002-03, February 2002.
- 2 *National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2001: First Results*. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
- 3 *Smoking Cessation Guidelines for Australian General Practice*. 2004 Edition.