



Kick The Butt!

Dr Roshan Jain



people understand the specific health risks of tobacco use but once the smokers become more aware of the danger of tobacco, most want to quit. Proper counselling and medication can double the chances of a smoker quitting his habit successfully. On the other hand, smokers who try to quit without counselling, nicotine substitutes and/or medicine do not generally succeed and will end up reverting back to smoking soon afterward.

Harsh Realities

There are reasons why individuals give up on quitting. Trying to give up smoking abruptly without any assistance usually does not bear success. This is because the withdrawal effects they would experience would overwhelm them. This establishes a belief that it's impossible to quit. Others prefer to live in denial and in the shadow of this nasty habit instead of making an effort that can disrupt their comfort zone; this is of course until their health lasts. Many are simply unaware of the methods and medicines to assist them to quit successfully.

A Changing Perspective

The process of shifting from smoker to a non-smoker status is difficult, but by no means impossible. It starts with awareness of health hazards associated with smoking, seeking the right help, exploring options/methods to give up and putting in your best show

In the movie *Ra.One*, SRK's character *G.One* tells his son, "Saal mein 10,000 log cigarette peena chhod dete hain (In a year, around 10,000 people quit smoking)." His son asks, "Packet pe warning dekh kar (by seeing the warning on the packet)?" SRK replies, "Nahin, mar kar (no by dying)." This was a pertinent and powerful message.

Perhaps dying is one sure way of quitting smoking. But is life so cheap that you simply puff it away?

The Obnoxious Smoker

Statistics on smoking related problems

are startling. According to World Health Organization (WHO), tobacco caused 100 million deaths in the 20th century, and it is believed that if current trends continue, it might cause one billion deaths in the 21st century. Tobacco kills up to half its users, about six million people each year. More than five million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use and more than six lakh are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke. Unless urgent action is taken, the annual death toll could rise to more than eight million by 2030.

Several studies have shown that few

to free yourself from the clutches of this dreadful habit. Expect failure and glitches along the way but most importantly, starting on an optimistic note is the most important step. Remember that motivation is a changing thing and is subject to fluctuation. It is imperative to get good awareness of the driving force behind individual motivational factors, and this requires effort and introspection.

Cycle Of Change

Making an effort to quit can already be termed as progress in the 'cycle of change'. Starting point of this cycle is the precontemplation stage where the individual has no intention for changing to the contemplation stage – at this stage one becomes aware of the problems but has made no commitment towards change. This will be followed by preparation, action, maintenance and relapse stages. The last one is when the person falls back to old patterns of behaviour. There is no end to the process of change which implies that a person is ever progressing in the cycle.

Individuals can be facilitated and guided into change by therapeutic talking techniques which include **Motivational Interviewing (MI)**, a method that concentrates on engaging intrinsic motivation within the client in order to change behaviour. MI is a goal-oriented and client-centric counselling style for eliciting behaviour change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence.

Consistent Effort

Remember, the only thing that is permanent in life is 'change'. Everything else is transient. Change is a necessary aspect of our world that affects our well-being (emotional, physical and spiritual) and grants stability through consistency on how well we adopt to the change. Quitting smoking may be the best thing you will do in your lifetime. If you don't succeed then try again and again, do something different each time. Lack of successes in quitting and return to smoking can never be the end of road. Remember that anything that doesn't kill you will only make you stronger. So don't quit on quitting! Kick the butt before it kicks yours!



Hair Loss Due To Smoking Fact or Myth?

Dr Ranjan Upadhyaya

Stress triggers puffing, you can hear multiple people saying this out while they try to justify smoking. Whether it is stress or a style statement, getting habituated to the stick can adversely affect your health. The harm of smoking is visible in the form of severe damage to the lungs and other organs.

Sometimes, it is also said in a sure shot way that smoking even leads to hair loss. Saying this is stretching the 'bad for health' statement too far, though smoking way too much is never advisable. While it is yet to be ascertained scientifically whether chain smoking is the culprit when it comes to thinning hairline, it is medically substantiated that nicotine present in cigarettes lead to constriction of blood vessels in the body. This might be blocking circulation of blood to hair follicles, which may subsequently affect hair growth or result in greying of hair and hair loss.

As per a survey conducted a few years back to establish a link between smoking and hair loss, causes were checked in men in the age group of 40 to 91 in Taiwan. It was seen that after considering the age factor and family histories, the rate of hair fall was greater in smokers. Also, the risks increased with the rise in smoking levels.

Several studies suggest that smoking is one of the causes for thinning of hair line. While there are no solid facts to support this line of thinking, there is a possibility of puffing creating certain conditions that trigger hair fall. However, if you think that quitting smoking will result in growing back of lost hair, then that too is not possible because of dormant hair follicles. You can only save what hair density you have.

Studies are ongoing to find a direct link between hair fall and smoking; it is a proven fact that too much of puffing is bad for overall health. So quitting or cutting down on smoking is always good. Maybe with this you might end up helping your hair too.