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FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

Lahore- Pakistan



Campus Counseling Center

Smoking Cessation

Cigarette smoking is the number one cause of preventable death around the world. Smoking affects almost every major tissues, blood vessels and organs of the body and can hence lead to a variety of health complications. Heart disease, lung cancer, stroke, emphysema and chronic bronchitis are amongst some of the long term ill effects that cigarette consumption may have. Some immediate bodily effects include:

Immediate Effects of Smoking on the Body

- Initial stimulation, then reduction in activity of brain and nervous system
- Anxiety and irritability
- Increased blood pressure
- Elevated heart rate
- Dull sense of smell and taste
- Bad breath and unhealthy teeth
- Headaches and dizziness
- Coughing due to smoke irritation
- Shortness of breath
- Decreased appetite
- Nausea and abdominal cramping
- Decreased blood flow to fingers and toes
- Decreased skin temperature
- Reduced stamina
- Disruption in development of the lungs if consumed at an early age.

What is in a Cigarette?

No matter how you consume it, tobacco is very dangerous for our health. From acetone and tar to nicotine and carbon monoxide smoking tobacco not just affects your lungs but can influence the entire body. Nicotine is the active chemical found in cigarettes that gets people hooked on to smoking but it is not the only substance within the cigarette that causes health problems. There are over 7000 different chemicals in a burning cigarette. Many of them are found in the tobacco itself while some are added as flavor enhancers or to make the paper burn longer and evenly. Trace amounts of certain insecticides, fertilizers and poisonous compounds such as arsenic and cyanide are also found in cigarettes. In addition, each cigarette has at least 70 carcinogens which are direct cancer causing chemicals.

Nicotine Addiction

Research has shown that nicotine acts on the brain in a manner that produces dependence on it.

Nicotine activates the reward pathways of the brain, increasing the level of dopamine, which regulates our feelings of pleasure.

Amount of nicotine in our bloodstream levels out within half an hour of consumption which urges us to consume more

Withdrawal symptoms include irritability, anger, anxiety, depression, attention deficits, sleep disturbances and increased appetite.

How to Quit Smoking?

It is important to know that no matter how long your journey with cigarettes has been, it is never too late to quit. Deciding to quit is a big step that requires determination, commitment and consistent effort. A structured approach based on application of certain skills is required to contend with the problem.

- **Setting a quit date.** Choose a date within the next seven days when you will want to quit smoking. The best way of making a commitment to give up smoking is to set an actual date for quitting, before which you can make all the necessary preparations.
- **Enlisting the help of others.** Let your friends, family and loved ones in on your plan about quitting smoking. Tell them how important their support and encouragement is in order for you to achieve success.
- **Anticipate the challenges that you may face.** Most people who relapse and start smoking again do so within the first three months of quitting. You can assist yourself by preparing ahead for the obstacles that you may face in this crucial period such as dealing with nicotine withdrawals and cravings.
- **Remove cigarettes from your surroundings.** Throw away all your cigarette packs and related materials. Clean your furniture, shampoo your car, wash all your clothes and any other items that may smell of smoke.
- **Make a list of reasons for quitting.** Focus on all the reasons which may include a number of things such as the health benefits, financial savings, improved appearance and enhanced self-esteem. This list will help you bolster your resolve to stop smoking.
- **Keep a craving journal.** This will help you identify your craving patterns and triggers. Note the moments in each day when you crave cigarettes. Jot down what time it was, what you were doing, who you were with, the intensity of the craving and what you were feeling.
- **Manage cravings.** Some strategies may include distracting yourself by engaging yourself in some other activity. Putting together a craving management kit, which may include, gum, munch-able snacks and bottles of water that can serve as substitutes may prove helpful. Removing yourself from tempting situations that may trigger cravings is also imperative.

For further information contact:

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