

## IS SMOKING BECOMING MORE OF A PROBLEM THAN A PLEASURE?

You know exactly where to find the smokers - they're usually camped outside your favorite restaurant, the front of the office building or under an awning when it's raining. They are relentless in finding a spot to do what they need to do and despite a great number of government agencies and other bodies working hard to regulate where, when and how smokers are allowed to light up, they usually find a way to, here's the interesting part, cause harm to themselves!

Well, it is an addiction and statistics show that most people try to quit smoking a few times before they finally succeed. So, for those of you who are still trying to quit, take heart as failing is not failure - it's practice. Keep at it: studies have shown that some combination of drugs, stop-smoking aids, counseling, support, and changes of habit can work for you.

Non-smokers feel that there should be strict bans on smoking, both in public and private spaces. Many people feel that smoking around children should be illegal, that it should be banned in all public places, regardless of children being in the immediate area or not.

When talking about money, many people think that smokers should pay more for health insurance and some people think that taxes should be raised so that the price of a pack of cigarettes will be \$10 or even \$20! A lot of people are against watching smokers on the big screen and believe all scenes with smoking should be banned from movies and billboards, and magazine ads for smoking should be made illegal.

There are many smokers among us, but there is a significant number that supports government intervention in the form of laws and taxes that will prohibit and mitigate the proliferation of tobacco use and the spread of second hand smoke. It remains to be seen whether or not these regulations will go into effect, but in the meantime, smokers are definitely finding it harder and harder to find smoking a "pleasure"!

## MEN'S HEALTH 10 TIPS FOR MEN TURNING 40

Do you remember thinking that this number was "old"? Well, you've made it to the big FOUR-O and even though you've taken your body for granted up until now and have been more occupied with planning your post-work finances, it may be time to focus on more pressing matters: your health. Read on to learn what preventative measures you can take right now to get your body ready for 50 more years of health, wealth and happiness.

1. **STAY AWAY FROM TRANS-FATS** - Research has shown that these stealth fats

found in fast food increase LDL cholesterol and can also increase your risk of heart disease. Even without added "help" from trans fats, as men get older, their cholesterol levels naturally rise, which increases their risk for heart disease. Stick to healthy fats like omega-3 found in fish, flaxseeds and walnuts to keep your ticker in tiptop shape.

2. **SEX IS IMPORTANT** - Most cases of erectile dysfunction (impotence) in older



men have a physical cause which has to do with not getting enough blood to the area in question. To improve circulation, refrain from smoking, which constricts blood vessels, exercise more and consult a physician about current medications. Some prescription drugs that treat high blood pressure or depression may worsen ED.

3. **DON'T IGNORE YOUR PROSTATE** - The prostate gland begins a growth spurt at age 40, a condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia, that has been related to hormone fluctuations. If you're urinating a lot at night, this might be happening to you. Don't worry though - benign prostatic hyperplasia isn't cancer, doesn't lead to cancer and is rarely life-threatening. To treat this condition, see your doctor and get a prescription for alpha-blockers, which relax the prostate's smooth muscle.
4. **BEAR WEIGHTS** - Not to depress you, but once you hit 40, a man's body starts producing less testosterone. Lower levels can affect your memory, sexual function and even muscle mass. To stave off decreasing muscle mass (once you hit 50 it declines 15% per decade), prevent back injuries and protect against heart disease, incorporate strength training into your work out.
5. **WAIST NOT WANT NOT** - Have you noticed your belly expand? This can result in dangerous visceral abdominal fat that can increase the risk for heart-related problems,

including a heart attack or stroke, especially if your waist size exceeds 40-inches. Exercise for 30 minutes at least three times a week and eat nutritious food which incorporates a variety of whole grains, lean meat and fruits and vegetables.

6. **THE MULTIVITAMINS CHECK** - Recent research discovered that your seemingly harmless daily multivitamin may be promoting the very conditions you're hoping to

prevent. Since most men already get their recommended dose of vitamins from enriched foods, exceeding the amount the body needs can up your risk for chronic diseases. Too much folate, for example, can increase your risk for colon cancer, while an excess of vitamin E may increase mortality. To be on the safe side, talk to your doctor about your nutritional habits before starting any supplemental regime.

7. **FOCUS ON FAMILY AND FRIENDS** - A happy home is the foundation to maintaining a healthy mind and body. Research also shows that a good social network made up of friends, family and peers can help steady you in times of stress and create a sense of belonging.

8. **GET RID OF PROCESSED FOODS** - Instant mashed potatoes, white bread, and other ready to eat foods are quickly broken down in the body, which can increase the body's absorption of glucose and rapidly drive up blood sugar levels. High blood sugar can contribute to weight gain, diabetes and other health problems.

In order to maintain steady blood sugar levels, reach for foods with a low glycemic index, such as whole grains and vegetables, which are digested slowly and don't cause sugar spikes.

9. **LESS ALCOHOL** - Did you ever thinking that drinking beer could give you a reason to rejoice? If you would much rather crack open a cold one than uncork a Bordeaux, you, too, can now rejoice. According to one study, drinking beer in moderation can deliver protection against heart attacks, stroke, hypertension, diabetes and dementia. That doesn't mean you can throw caution to the winds - drinking more than one drink per day, defined as a 5-ounce glass of wine, 12-ounce beer or 1.5-ounces of 80-proof distilled liquor, can increase your risk of liver disease and stroke, according to the Mayo Clinic.
10. **WATCH OUT FOR PROSTATE CANCER** - This is the most common kind of cancer among men, other than skin cancers, according to the American Cancer Society. To reduce your risk, eat low-fat, high-fiber foods, such as soy beans, tofu and plenty of vegetables. Taking vitamins D and E, selenium and green tea may also help prevent prostate cancer, but before embarking on any supplemental diets, check with your doctor.