



Tobacco

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Tobacco is a plant genus of the nightshade (*Solanaceae*) family.

Christopher Columbus introduced the tobacco plant to Europe from the Bahamas in the 15th century. Starting in the 17th century the smoking of tobacco became increasingly widespread. Tobacco was first smoked in a pipe. The industrial production and marketing of tobacco in cigarette form began in the mid-19th-century.



Main active ingredient

- Nicotine



Legal status

- Legal
- It is prohibited from being sold and given to minors under the age of 16
- Smoking ban:
 - in public buildings (*e.g. schools, hospitals*)
 - in bars, cafés, restaurants
 - in enclosed sporting and leisure venues
 - in sports facilities (*if minors under the age of 16 are playing sports*), playgrounds
 - in the car (*if there are passengers under the age of 12*)
- The law applies to tobacco products and electronic cigarettes



Consumption modalities

- Mainly smoked (*cigarette, cigar, pipe, shisha*)
- Less frequently chewed or taken as snuff (*snuff tobacco, chewing tobacco*)





Onset and duration of effect

- **Onset:** approx. 10 seconds after inhalation
- **Duration:** approx. 10 – 30 minutes



Effects

- Invigorating, stimulating
- Calming, relaxing
- Boosts attention, concentration
- Alleviates stress and feelings of anxiety
- Attenuates hunger and stimulates digestion



Risks and side effects

- Impaired sense of smell and taste
- Blood vessels constrict
- Blood pressure and heart rate increase
- Dizziness, headaches
- Coughing to the point of nausea
- Increased secretion of gastric acid
- Fall in blood oxygen level



Long-term risks

- Addiction
- Periodontitis: gum inflammation, tooth loss
- Premature ageing of the skin
- Erectile dysfunction, impotence, reduced fertility
- Respiratory tract diseases: "smoker's cough", chronic bronchitis, lung infection, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (*COPD*)
- Cancers: lung, buccal cavity, pharyngeal cavity, oesophagus, stomach, pancreas
- Cardiovascular diseases: hypertension, cardiac arrhythmia, heart attack, stroke, "smoker's leg"

Worth knowing...

- ✓ Nicotine rapidly leads to dependence - also among children and adolescents. Many consumers become addicted.
- ✓ Many of the health consequences of smoking are primarily caused not by the nicotine but by the tobacco smoke. This is a complex mixture of more than 5000 agents, including many toxic and carcinogenic substances. There is no "safe" smoking dosage.
- ✓ Regular smoking reduces life expectancy by an average of 10 years. Anyone giving up smoking can at least partially reverse the hazardous health impact. The sooner this occurs, the greater the reconvergence with the state of a non-smoker.
- ✓ Passive smoking as well can cause or exacerbate disorders and illnesses. For example, there is an increased risk of respiratory tract diseases, cardiac diseases, stroke and lung cancer. There is no "harmless" threshold for tobacco smoking. That means that even "a little" smoke in the open air can be dangerous. This being so, the existing smoking bans primarily aim to protect non-smokers against the consequences of passive smoking.

Are shishas less harmful than cigarettes?

- A shisha (*waterpipe*) mainly entails smoking aromatised tobacco (*apple, mango, chocolate etc.*).
- The effects and risks are similar to cigarette consumption.
- The harmful substances in the smoke are not filtered out by the water.
- Where the shisha tobacco contains nicotine (*there are nicotine-free products*), even when smoking a shisha there is the risk of developing nicotine dependence.



Is the E-cigarette an alternative to smoking tobacco?

- Electronic inhalation products (*E-cigarettes/E-shishas*) create steam, without combustion, which is then inhaled.
- There are fillings (*"liquids"*) with and without nicotine.
- On the whole, fewer harmful substances are released during vaporisation than during the combustion of tobacco, although there are still no long-term studies of the health risk.
- The E-cigarette can help heavy smokers change their habits.
- The biggest health benefit is achieved by neither smoking nor "vaping".
- Especially children and adolescents who have not previously smoked cigarettes or other tobacco products can be led astray into smoking products containing nicotine by allegedly harmless E-cigarettes/E-shishas.



Does stopping smoking automatically lead to weight increase?

In the first few months after the last cigarette, former smokers put on an average of 2-4 kg.

There are two reasons for this:

- Nicotine “burns” approx. an extra 200 calories per day. If the body is no longer receiving nicotine, the basal metabolic rate (*daily calorie requirement*) declines, fewer calories are required.
- In addition, the appetite-suppressant effect of nicotine is no longer present. Confectionery or foodstuffs containing sugar are then frequently used as a “substitute gratification”. If one consumes fruit and vegetables instead and takes regular exercise, there is no need to fear weight increase becoming a problem. Even someone who really does put on a few pounds – the health benefits of stopping smoking make up for it many times over!

Anyone wishing to give up smoking will find various initiatives for help:

www.tabac-stop.lu

It's worth kicking the habit!

No matter how much one has smoked or for how long:

- After just a few hours the body's oxygen supply is improved.
- After 24 hours there is a reduced risk of heart attack.
- After 2-3 days, the sense of smell and taste improves.
- After 2-3 weeks there are improvements in circulation and lung function.
- As the years pass without smoking, the risks of stroke, lung cancer and other cancers decrease.



There is no such thing as a risk-free consumption of legal and illegal drugs!

When consuming any legal and illegal drug, the subjectively perceived effects depend on various factors (*how consumed, dose, age, gender, environment, mood as well as experience and expectation*).

Consumption of any drug can result in addiction.

The consumption of legal and illegal drugs is to be discouraged:

- In adolescence (*physical and mental development*)
- When driving and during other activities requiring a “clear head” (*e.g. sport, when operating machinery...*)
- In the workplace / in school
- During pregnancy and breastfeeding
- If there are previous medical conditions

Particular care is also required:

- If the quality of the product is unknown and cannot be checked
- In the event of combined use, e.g. alcohol and other drugs
- When medication is taken at the same time

If you notice that a person is not well after having consumed legal or illegal drugs, act responsibly and look after that person. If in doubt, phone the emergency number and administer first aid.



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**Tem perguntas sobre a
dependência, as drogas e as
ofertas de ajuda?**

***Questions about addiction,
drugs and assistance?***

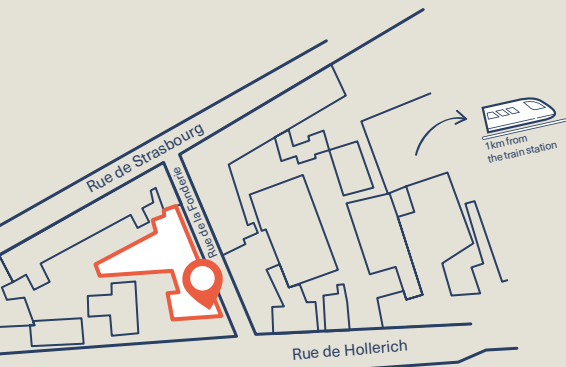
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<http://bib.cnapa.lu/public/index.php>

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