

REMEMBER:

- The effects of smoking are present and detrimental no matter if you have 2 or 20 a day
- Quitting is beneficial at **ANY** stage in life.
- Keep regular dental check ups whether you are smoking have quit to monitor risks of gum disease or mouth cancer

Quitting Smoking

- Ask health professionals such as your Doctor, Dentist or Pharmacist for advice
- Phone **Quitline 137 848 (13 QUIT)**
- Set yourself achievable goals and try not to be discouraged by short-term failures



Creating Smiles with Care

Smoking and Your Mouth

What to expect when you quit



216 Bazaar St, Maryborough

Tel: 07 4121 3726

www.toothworkx.com.au

The Facts

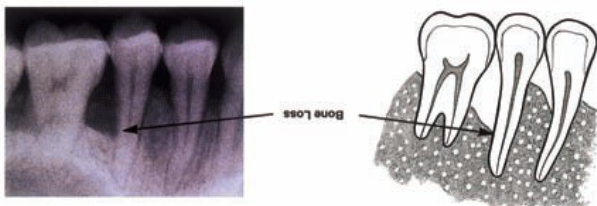
Most of us know that smoking causes many problems for our general health. But, there are also major implications for the health of the mouth including:

- Stained teeth
- Smokers breath
- Loss of taste
- Gum Disease
- Tooth Loss and
- Oral Cancers

Healthy gums appear pink and firm. Smokers gums often vary in colour from unusually pale to a purplish tinge and the surface can appear tough or thickened. These changes are due to the restriction of blood supply and oxygen to the gums.

Healthy gums need good circulation to bring oxygen and nutrients and take away waste products. This is also important to allow the defence processes to protect against infection. Smoking disrupts this process of defence and smokers are **6 times more likely to develop gum disease** than non-smokers.

Smoking causes damage to the gums and the bone supporting the teeth. Long term gum disease can result in tooth loss—smokers lose more teeth than non-smokers



Oral Cancer

Smoking is a major cause of cancer of the mouth. The more cigarettes smoked per year and the more years a person smokes, the more the risk increases.

The combination of smoking and heavy drinking also increases the risk of oral cancers. Diagnosed early, they can often be successfully treated. Early-stage cancers are usually not painful and can appear as small white or red areas. They may also appear as ulcerations that do not heal. These can be detected during dental check ups.

By the times the symptoms of oral cancer have become noticeable to a patient, the cancer may be in its late stages and the prognosis is less favourable. For this reason, **DENTAL CHECK UPS are important!**

BUT THERE IS GOOD NEWS!!

PROGRESS OF GUM DISEASE AND RISK OF ORAL CANCER CAN BE PREVENTED AND REDUCED BY STOPPING SMOKING, COMBINED WITH APPROPRIATE DENTAL CARE.



What to Expect when you Quit smoking (effects on the mouth)

As discussed previously, smoking lowers the bodies ability to protect against infection and restrict blood supply to the gums. Therefore, as the body slowly heals after quitting smoking several things can become noticeable:

- The gums will most likely start bleeding more than they did before quitting. This is because the blood supply is returning to the gums and they respond to infection in the “normal” fashion. Unfortunately, this still means that infection is present in the mouth. However, it allows for the infection to be identified far more quickly than while a person is smoking.
- There may be a compulsion to replace the “habit” of smoking with something else such as chewing or just eating. It is important to choose healthy alternatives such as sugar free gum or low sugar, low carbohydrate snacks. This will prevent any unnecessary problems, such as decay, from starting.
- Taste and smell can improve... ENJOY!!
- It is important to keep a close eye on any changes in the mouth even after quitting. The risk of mouth cancer and gum disease is reduced, but not erased. Remember to have regular dental check ups.