

# Myths & Realities

## Disprove Tobacco Myths

(NAPSA)—Fact—you can protect yourself from the No. 1 preventable cause of premature death in America: smoking. Sadly, many people believe myths about tobacco. Here are some of the facts:

**Myth**—“Light” or “Low-Tar” cigarettes are safer than the others.

**Reality**—There’s no safe cigarette. “Light” and “Low-Tar” cigarettes can deliver tar and nicotine, just as regular cigarettes.

**Myth**—Since tobacco is a natural product, smoking is “natural.”

**Reality**—Tobacco is not the only ingredient in most cigarettes. Cigarettes contain 599 additives that form over 4,000 chemical compounds, including carcinogens.

**Myth**—Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among women.

**Reality**—While breast cancer is the leading type of cancer in women, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in women and men.

**Myth**—Secondhand smoke is not harmful.

**Reality**—An estimated 50,000 people die each year as a result of secondhand smoke exposure.

**Myth**—It’s time to turn the public health focus to more pressing issues, such as AIDS, crime and “hard” drug addiction.

**Reality**—More people are killed by tobacco than AIDS, homicide, drugs, car accidents, fires and suicide combined. Nicotine is considered more addictive and harder to quit than heroin. Tobacco-related diseases kill half of lifelong smokers.

**Myth**—It’s overkill to say pregnant women should stay away from secondhand smoke.

**Reality**—Secondhand smoke exposure during pregnancy has been linked to sudden infant



**Learn the truth about tobacco.**

death syndrome. Evidence also suggests a relationship between secondhand smoke and childhood cancers.

**Myth**—Smoking causes lung cancer only. If you avoid that, you have nothing to worry about.

**Reality**—Smoking causes myriad cancers, including cancers of the lip, oral cavity, pharynx, esophagus, stomach, pancreas, larynx, cervix, kidney and bladder. There’s also heart disease, COPD, pneumonia, chronic bronchitis and many others.

**Myth**—Smoking is a choice.

**Reality**—Smoking is addictive. Nearly 90 percent of smokers began smoking before age 20. The tobacco industry has a history of targeting youth.

**Myth**—If you really want to quit, you just have to put your mind to it.

**Reality**—It’s best to consult a physician to create a personalized quit plan. Your quit plan should include setting a quit date, informing your social support network of your intentions to quit, and determining the best nicotine replacement therapy to meet your needs.

Visit [www.BecomeAnEX.org](http://www.BecomeAnEX.org) for your personalized quit plan.