



How Does Smoking Affect Women's Health?

Women's health is affected differently and, in some cases, more than men's health. Here are some tobacco related illnesses that affect women.

- Lung cancer kills more women than breast cancer.
- Women who smoke experience a premature decline in lung function.
- Post-menopausal women who smoke have lower bone density (osteoporosis) and an increased risk of fracture than post-menopausal women who do not smoke.
- Women who smoke have more premenstrual symptoms, painful menstruation and premature menopause.
- Women who smoke AND use birth control pills are at a much higher risk of stroke or heart disease.
- The number of deaths by stroke is higher in women who smoke.
- Smoking increases the risk of cervical cancer.
- Smoking at least doubles the risk of cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death in women.

Sources:

Samet, Jonathan M., Yoon, Soon-Young et al. Woman and the Tobacco Epidemic – Challenges for the 21st Century. World Health organization, 2001.

Greaves, L., Barr, V.J., Filtered Policy: Women and Tobacco in Canada. The Canadian Women's Health Network, 2000.

Women and Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General. USA. 2001.

Updated November 2001