



From the Lungs to the Heart: How Tobacco-related Diseases and Cancers Affect Men's Health

Tobacco-related Diseases and Cancers Among Men

Commercial tobacco use contributes to a wide range of diseases, including several of the most common causes of death among men in the United States: Cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic lower respiratory diseases, and diabetes.¹ Higher rates of tobacco use and additional barriers to health, including lack of coordination in healthcare, lower utilization of healthcare, and harmful stereotypes about masculinity, are partially responsible for lower life expectancy among men.^{2,3}

Men with low socioeconomic status (SES) characteristics experience additional barriers, such as social isolation, chronic stress, and lack of preventive care, that can influence all aspects of health. Indeed, low SES characteristics are known drivers of chronic diseases, and people with lower incomes are more likely to report fair or poor health.^{4,5} Further, tobacco-related diseases disproportionately affect men with low SES characteristics, who are more likely to die from them.^{6,7}

Preventing Tobacco-related Deaths Among Men

The most important way to prevent tobacco-related deaths among men is to help them quit tobacco. Quitting smoking at any age improves health, but there are benefits to quitting at a younger age—excess risk of death may go down by ≥90% when men quit smoking before age 45.⁸ Routine medical care can help connect men with evidence-based tobacco cessation aids and state quitlines, which are known to help people successfully quit.⁹ Additionally, primary care physicians can help connect men with screening resources to detect cancers and other health conditions in their early stages, when they are more treatable.¹⁰

Estimated number of cancer deaths among men in 2023

Type of Cancer	Deaths
All cancer sites*	322,080
Lung	67,160
Prostate	34,700
Colorectal	28,470
Pancreatic	26,620
Oral	8,140

*An estimated 33% of cancer deaths in men are caused by cigarette smoking.¹¹

Data from American Cancer Society's Cancer Facts and Figures, 2023, Table 1

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking, causing an estimated 21,000 lung cancer cases each year.¹² Smoking exacerbates radon exposure: People who smoke are **10 times** more likely to get lung cancer after exposure to radon than those who have never smoked but are exposed to the same amount of radon.¹² Additionally, people with low SES characteristics face barriers to protecting themselves from radon, such as an inability to pay for radon testing and mitigation.¹³

Socioeconomic Factors Affecting Men's Health^{17,18}



Environment

- Housing • Transportation • Pollution • Stress



Education

- Literacy • Health literacy
- English proficiency • Digital literacy



Economic Stability

- Income • Employment • Medical debt



Food

- Access to healthy foods



Community

- Community engagement
- Availability of support systems



Healthcare

- Insurance coverage • Provider availability
- Quality of care



24% of men report using some form of tobacco.¹⁴

77% of people report wanting to quit smoking.¹⁵

278,000 men die from smoking-related diseases annually.¹⁶

Preventing Tobacco-related Deaths Among Men in Your Community

Whether you represent a non-profit organization, a business, or a state health department, you can support men as they live healthier, tobacco-free lives.

Ways to Support	Actions	Resources
Promote regular medical care among men in your community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help men find primary care physicians for preventive care and screenings, and encourage men to seek medical care routinely. • Connect men with affordable medical care through federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Resources and Services Administration's Health Center Locator • National Association of Community Health Centers' What is a Health Center Guide • National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics
Better understand tobacco and cancer demographics in your community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use county, state, and federal-level data to understand tobacco use and cancer demographics in your community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC's United States Cancer Statistics • SMHN's Beyond the Lungs: How Cardiovascular Disease and Cancers Caused by Commercial Tobacco Affect Low Income Populations • Healthy People 2030 Objectives for Tobacco Use and Cancer.
Support policies that protect people from tobacco and secondhand smoke.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps in tobacco-related policies and resources in your community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC's STATE System • American Lung Association's (ALA) State of Tobacco Control 2023
Connect men with tobacco cessation resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share free tobacco cessation resources, such as confidential state quitlines and text to quit services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALA's Billing Guide for Tobacco Screening and Cessation • CDC's Tips from Former Smokers Campaign • SMHN Quit Tobacco Toolkit: Men's Health • North American Quitline Consortium's Quitline Map • Smokefree.gov's free tobacco cessation resources
Promote cancer screening among men who have smoked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote timely, affordable cancer screening for men. • Collaborate with healthcare providers to encourage lung cancer screening among current and former smokers. • Collaborate with organizations that increase awareness for lung and colorectal cancer screening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC's colorectal cancer Screen for Life Campaign • ChangeLab Solution's Understanding Paid Sick Leave and Preventive Cancer Screening Fact Sheet • ALA's Lung Cancer Screening Billing Guide • National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable's 80% in Every Community Campaign • American College of Radiology's National Lung Cancer Screening Day and Lung Cancer Screening Resources
Connect men with cancer survivorship resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect men with cancer support through cancer organizations. • Collaborate with community health workers to help men as they navigate a cancer diagnosis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Cancer Institute's Support Services Directory • Patient Advocate Foundation's National Financial Resource Directory • Colorectal Cancer Alliance's Buddies Program • Pancreatic Cancer Action Network's PanCAN Patient Services • GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer's Lung Cancer Hotline • George Washington University's Cancer Center's free training • National Association of Community Health Workers
Address health disparities in your community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use data to understand local social determinants of health and to inform actions to address tobacco-related disparities in your community. • Connect men to resources and services that address food insecurity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC's Social Determinants of Health and PLACES data • Humana Inc's Community Partnerships resources • Counter Tobacco's resources and policies • Humana Inc's Healthcare Provider Food Insecurity and Health Resource Toolkit

Featured Resource

American Lung Cancer Screening Initiative's Leaders for Lung Cancer Screening [Public Service Announcements \(PSAs\)](#) have messages from leaders across the United States, including • [Dr. Wade Jams](#), Thoracic Medical Oncologist • [Pat McCabe](#), Mayor of Hot Springs, AR • [J.P. Gallagher](#), CEO of Butte-Silver Bow • [Quinton Lucas](#), Mayor of Kansas City, MO • [Craig Greenberg](#), Mayor of Louisville, KY • [Marco McClendon](#), Mayor of West Memphis, AR • [George Fuller](#), Mayor of McKinney, TX • [Owen Henry](#), Mayor of Old Bridge, NJ • [John Tecklenberg](#), Mayor of Charleston, SC • [Michael Vargas](#), Mayor of City of Perris, CA. These PSAs can be downloaded and used in local promotions.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Consortium of National Networks
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