Puff Puff, Bye-Bye

Is it time to butt out for good?

June 1, 2009 By Laura Whitehorn

Amidst daily conflicting claims of the health benefits and drawbacks of various foods, beverages and even plastics, one claim is irrefutable: Smoking cigarettes causes lung cancer and raises the risk of heart disease and stroke. A recent study shows that smoking (and secondhand smoke) can even increase the risk of stroke for both you and your spouse or partner. Nevertheless, cigarette companies lure thousands into lighting up each year, even as more people struggle to kick the habit.

Adding a new wrinkle to the subject, a bill to limit the use of flavored additives in cigarettes is making its way through Congress. Flavoring cigarettes with spices (think clove and vanilla), the bill's sponsors say, masks any harsh taste and makes young people more likely to start puffing. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus tried unsuccessfully to include menthol among the flavors to be banned (an estimated 75 percent of black smokers choose mentholated cigarettes compared with 25 percent of other smokers). But bill or no bill, the smoke has cleared on this: For your health (not to mention that of your wallet), quitting is a must.

Easier said than done? Here's help: If your city doesn't offer its own smoking cessation program, you can get free support—including workbooks, tips and even individual counseling—at smokefree.gov, 877.448.7848.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/smoke-cigarettes-cancer-16701-8892