

Smoking a Worsening Problem Among Latinos

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The habit of smoking, which has significant negative health effects, may be growing among American Latinos, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) [reports](#).

Smoking is the cause of most cases of lung cancer, with roughly 443,000 people in the United States dying of lung cancer each year. In 2009, an estimated 8,400 Latinos were diagnosed with lung cancer—the leading cause of cancer death in Latino men and the second leading cause in Latino women after breast cancer. Other health problems brought about by smoking include other cancers—such as cancer of the mouth, throat, larynx, esophagus, stomach, kidney, bladder and cervix—as well as heart disease, stroke, leukemia, asthma, hip fractures and cataracts.

Latinos are less likely than non-Latino whites to smoke. In 2010, 13 percent of Latinos were smokers, as opposed to 21 percent of non-Latino whites. However, these demographics may be changing. Only 11 percent of Latino immigrants smoke, as opposed to almost 17 percent of American-born Latinos, and a full 18 percent of Latino high school students smoke.

Fortunately, most of the health problems associated with smoking can be alleviated by kicking the habit. Studies show that quitting smoking by age 30 reduces the odds of premature death from smoking-related health issues by 90 percent, while quitting by age 50 reduces those odds by 50 percent. Even quitting at age 60 or later can help you live longer. Unfortunately, the addictive nature of the nicotine in tobacco makes it hard to quit. Studies show that the majority of Latino smokers want to quit smoking, with almost 10 percent reporting they quit in the past year.

For more information and resources on how to quit smoking, [click here](#).
