

The Great American Smokeout Day is November 18, 2010!

Let the holiday's begin. November is here, time for family, friends, and most of all new beginnings, or shall we say endings? We all know smoking is harmful to your health. Its effects often lead to very serious poor health care outcomes such as lung cancer and heart disease. What many fail to recognize is **its harmful effects on the skin.**



Smoking is strongly associated with many dermatological conditions and is second only to sun damage when it comes to causes of premature skin aging. A smoker's skin is estimated to wrinkle up to 20 years earlier than that of a non-smoker.

Other harmful effects to your skin caused from smoking can include: poor wound healing, squamous cell carcinoma, melanoma, oral cancer, acne, psoriasis, and even hair loss. Smoking speeds up the normal aging process of the skin by impairing the natural production of collagen and elastin which are similar to fibers giving our skin strength and elasticity. The chemicals in

tobacco also stimulate a greater production of elastosis material which further degrades the skins elasticity.

Nicotine, one of the 4,000 chemicals in cigarettes causes our blood vessels to constrict, reducing blood flow, subsequently depriving our skin of oxygen and other vital nutrients. Some evidence even suggests that smoking can cause premature resorption of facial bones causing an elder appearance, possibly due to an antiestrogenic effect. While skin aging and wrinkles caused by smoking may not be reversible, remember it is never too late to quit and your skin can experience some immediate benefits such as enhanced wound healing and delayed skin aging.

Listed below are some key facts about skin, aging, and smoking.

Why Smoking Accelerates Aging	Symptoms of Aging due to Smoking
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cigarette smoke release a chemical that causes aging, especially of the skin. Acetaldehyde affects the cross-linking bonds of the tissues. These cross-linking bonds hold our tissues together.• Smoking picks up the pace of the enzymes which break down the collagen and elastin. Collagen and elastin are the fibers that keep your skin compact and youthful. Smoking also depletes Vitamin C which is highly required for the synthesis of collagen.• Smoking restricts the	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smoking speeds up the process of aging. This is noticeable on the skin because the skin sags and wrinkles prematurely due to smoking.• Smoking makes the skin lifeless. The skin looks dry, old, tired and unhealthy due to smoking.• Facial wrinkles develop due to smoking.• Smoking causes premature thinning and graying of the hair. Smokers have twice the risk of becoming bald as compared to the non-smokers.• Smoking discolors the teeth.

<p>blood vessels. This in turn slows down the blood flow to your skin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smoking deprives your skin of oxygen and essential nutrients.• Smoke releases radiation which is a strong aging factor. A smoker who smokes one and a half packs of cigarette per day is exposed to radiation which is equal to 300 chest x-rays a year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smoking leads to the formation of wrinkles around the lips of the smokers. The action of sucking on cigarettes on a regular basis causes the formation of wrinkles around the lips.• Smokers have more frown lines because they often look through the smoke haze that they expel in front of their eyes.
--	--