

Respiratory system addendum on smoking:

Smoking can be deadly.

- A little bit about statistics:

Yes, there are stories about people that live to a ripe old age and smoke.

Yes, you can win the lottery.

- These things are all possible, **BUT**, chances are that if you smoke, you will die between 13 and 14 years earlier than a non-smoker.

- Dangers of smoking:

- destroy cilia lining the bronchi. In response to irritation, the lungs produce more mucus, but without cilia to sweep it out, it starts clogging the lungs leading to “smokers cough”.

- kill macrophages in the lungs (thus preventing you from fighting off infections).

- cause lung cancer (most people die within one year of diagnosis).

- bladder, pancreas, mouth & throat cancers are also more common in smokers.

- can cause emphysema (alveoli deteriorate, thus causing difficulty in breathing).

- increases blood pressure & bad cholesterol leading to strokes & heart attacks.

- wounds & bones take longer to heal - skin ages prematurely (wrinkles), taste and smell are less sensitive.

- second hand smoke increases these risks for non-smokers.

- smoking while pregnant deprives the fetus of oxygen.

- Each year smoking kills approximately 440,000 people in the U.S.

- more deaths than car accidents, alcohol & drug abuse, HIV & murders combined.

- Quitting smoking can be difficult for some people due to nicotine addiction, but:

- within a year lung capacity is almost back to normal.

- within 15 years, the risk of heart disease and lung cancer drops back to normal.