

QUITTING SMOKING

Besides all the usual detrimental effects of smoking, smoking before surgery is even more dangerous. Smoking before surgery puts you at a higher risk for postoperative heart attacks, blood clots, pneumonia, infections and even death. If you make this decision to have surgery, you **MUST** quit smoking as soon as possible, a minimum of 4 weeks before surgery and at least 8 weeks after surgery.

Quitting smoking can make a huge difference in your health and recovery from surgery. In fact, the longer you abstain from smoking, the better your chances of a healthy recovery. Smoking includes cigarettes, cigars, hookah and vaping and e-cigarettes. Anything with nicotine is considered smoking.

3 REASONS SMOKING COMPLICATES SURGERY

1. It complicates anesthesia

Anesthesiologists have to work harder to keep smokers breathing while under anesthesia, fighting against lungs compromised by cigarette smoke.

2. The heart must work harder

Smoking compromises heart function, putting a patient at a greater risk for heart problems during or after surgery. Studies show that smokers have a 77% greater risk of heart attack after surgery than nonsmokers.

3. Wounds take longer to heal.

Carbon monoxide in a smoker's body robs tissues of the oxygen they need to heal. The toxins in the blood of smokers also permeate the tissue, which further compromises the healing process. **Smoking significantly increases wound necrosis and infection**, which are not only dangerous to your health, but significantly increase scarring.

TIPS TO QUIT SMOKING

If you are quitting smoking for surgery, it is important that you **do not ingest any nicotine products including cigarettes, cigars, hookah, vaping, e-cigarettes and gum**. Therefore, nicotine replacement therapy should **not** be used prior to surgery.

Some tips to help quit:

- Throw away cigarettes, lighter and ashtrays
- Spend time with non-smoking friends and family
- Exercise
- Chew gum or hard candy
- Keep your hands busy with a pen or toothpick
- Drink lots of water
- Relax with deep breathing

Visit www.smokefree.gov to Build Your Own Quit Plan. The site includes tips, apps, texting programs and games to help quit smoking.