

Health Risks of Smoking Cigars

Everyone has heard the risks associated with smoking cigarettes, but the risks of cigar smoking are often overlooked. Many people are uncertain whether the risks of smoking cigars are equally dangerous, less dangerous, or more so. Regular cigar smoking can cause major health problems, according to the National Cancer Institute. Cigar smoking has been linked, through scientific research, with cancers of the lungs, larynx, esophagus, and oral cavity. Newer research indicates that the development of pancreatic cancer may also be strongly linked to cigar smoking. Individuals who frequently inhale cigar smoke are at significantly greater risk of developing lung disease and heart problems, caution doctors.

In those individuals who smoke regularly and inhale while smoking, the health threats of cigar smoking increase dramatically. An individual who smokes three to four cigars per day is at eight times the risk of developing some kind of oral cancer compared to a nonsmoker. While it is clear that smoking cigars on a daily basis can pose serious health risks, it is not yet clear what the health risks of occasional cigar smoking may be.

Because it is apparent that so many more people have become addicted to cigarettes than cigars it is natural for many people to question whether cigars are as addictive as cigarettes. The fact is that every tobacco product has the potential to become addictive because it contains nicotine. Take for example the effects of smokeless tobacco products. Products such as chewing tobacco can become extremely addictive simply because they contain tobacco, which in turn contains nicotine. Since cigar smokers do not inhale deeply or at all, the nicotine is inhaled superficially. Cigarette smokers, on the other hand, tend to inhale deeply, allowing the nicotine to be absorbed more quickly and readily by the lungs. However, despite the tendency of most cigar smokers to inhale the nicotine only superficially, it is still very likely to experience addiction if the user smokes cigars on a regular basis.

But if nicotine is so addictive, it would stand to reason that cigar smokers would smoke more often. It appears that there are many reasons why most people avoid becoming addicted to cigars. The most obvious reason is, as previously mentioned, that the nicotine is inhaled much less effectively than in regular cigarette smoking, resulting in less nicotine being absorbed by the body. Another reason is that cigars are not as readily accessible as cigarettes. Most smokers regard cigars as a luxury item and save them for special occasions. However they can become addictive when cigars are smoked on a regular basis. As logic would indicate, as the frequency of use increases, the health risks of any kind of smoking increase dramatically.