



How does smoking affect the way I age?

Smoking results in carbon monoxide being absorbed by the blood instead of oxygen. All your organs, including your skin, become starved of oxygen. Your skin becomes more susceptible to wrinkling.

Your liver goes into overdrive trying to expel the chemicals from your body and cannot perform its normal functions properly. Your skin takes a yellowish-gray cast.

Smoking uses up vitamin C in the body. Vitamin C preserves collagen in the skin. Collagen gives skin its plump and youthful appearance. When collagen breaks down, premature wrinkles surface around the eyes and mouth.

The physical act of smoking causes squinting and pursing of the lips, further exaggerating wrinkles around the eyes and mouth. Smoking also stains your teeth and fingernails!

Other health Effects:

Not only does smoking make you look older, it also can lead to cancers of the lung, oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, esophagus, bladder, stomach, cervix, kidney and pancreas. Evidence also links smoking to acute myeloid leukemia.

What can I do?

Quit smoking! After all, smokers who quit between ages 35 to 39 add an average of 3-5 years to their lives!

Sources: www.quit-smoking-stop.com, www.quitsmoking.about.com, www.health.learninginfo.org, www.americanheart.org

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Harvard School of Public Health— NIH NIEHS Grant P30-ES000002



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