

## TOBACCO USE AND CANCERS

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World-wide data collected over the past several decades have led to the conclusion that cigarette smoking and other methods of usage of tobacco have been contributing to the development of approximately one-third of all cancers in the world.

Facts are that among the over 4000 constituents of tobacco smoke there are about sixty (60) cancer causing agents (carcinogens). In addition, there are substances in the smoke which promote the growth and severity of the malignant process initiated by carcinogens.

Tissues in the mouth, throat including the larynx (voice-box) and the lungs which are bathed by the inhaled smoke, are at greater risk for the development of cancers. However, some of the carcinogens which enter the lungs are absorbed into the blood stream and are then carried to other tissues; this explains the reason for the increased incidence of cancers of the kidney, urinary bladder, uterine cervix and other tissues in cigarette smokers. There are other constituents of tobacco which put the smoker at greater risk for heart attacks, strokes and other vascular disorders. Furthermore, non-smokers who, over a period of time are exposed to, and passively inhale the smoke are also at increased risk for smoking related diseases.

Cessation of smoking leads to considerable reduction in the risk for cancers and other diseases caused by smoking. Indeed, following recent bans placed on smoking in public places in communities in some countries have already resulted in a reduction of heart attacks in both smokers and non-smokers in the communities.