

# HIV

# & TOBACCO USE

## PATHWAYS TO WELLNESS

People living with HIV are living longer and healthier lives than ever before. In fact, life expectancy is now 78 years<sup>1</sup>—similar to the U.S. national average.<sup>2</sup> Access to affordable healthcare and more effective antiretroviral therapy treatment have led to these improvements. However, tobacco use can cause real harm to the health and well-being of people living with HIV. Using tobacco while living with HIV can weaken the immune system and increase many health related risks.<sup>3</sup> People living with HIV who use tobacco on antiretroviral therapy had mortality rates 6 to 13 times higher from lung cancer than from AIDS-related causes.<sup>4</sup>



**Quitting tobacco before the age of 40 reduces smoking-related deaths by 90% and quitting at any age can give back 10 years of your life.**

# WE BREATHE

SUPPORTING TOBACCO-FREE LGBTQ COMMUNITIES

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# WHY QUIT SMOKING?

People living with HIV reduce the risk for many serious illnesses and diseases including:<sup>5</sup>

Cancers affecting your lung, head, neck, cervix, anus, and other areas of your body

Bacterial pneumonia and pneumocystis pneumonia, a dangerous lung infection

Heart disease and stroke

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

Mouth infections including hairy leukoplakia (white mouth sores) and thrush

Other life-threatening illnesses that can lead to an AIDS diagnosis

It is never too late to quit smoking and start your journey to a healthier life. There are immediate benefits from quitting smoking after only a few hours: blood pressure, heart pulse, and body temperature all normalize. Taste, smell, and breathing improves.<sup>6</sup> Take control of your health and [talk with your healthcare provider](#) about programs and products that can help you quit smoking.

Use [free online resources](#) to help you make that first step towards your future:



- [kickitca.org](http://kickitca.org)
- [betobaccofree.hhs.gov](http://betobaccofree.hhs.gov)
- [cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips](http://cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips)
- [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov)

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