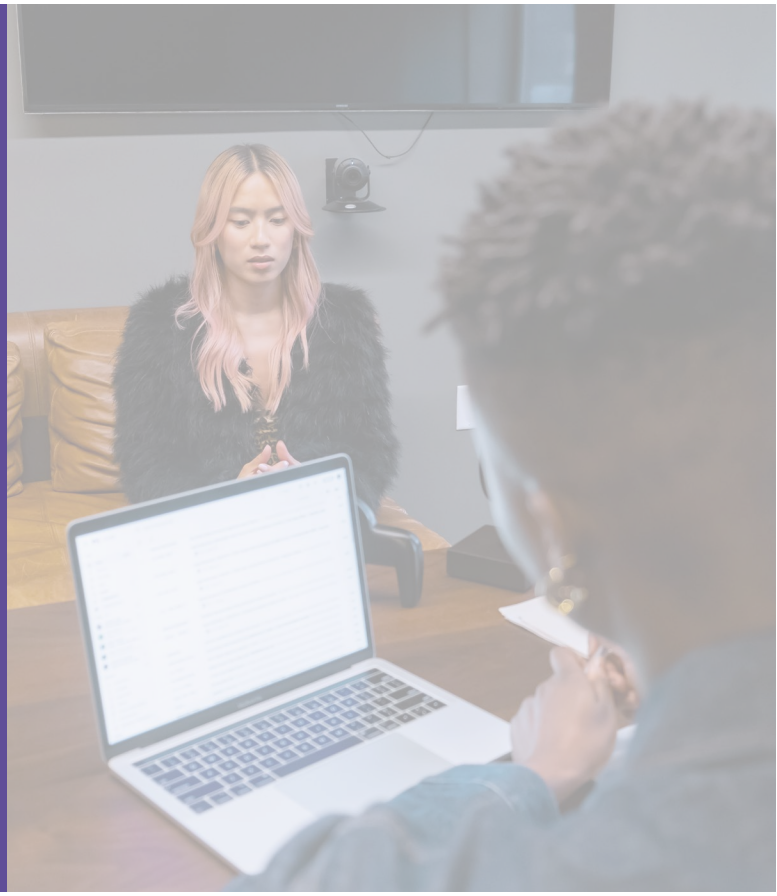
HIV & TOBACCO USE

PATHWAYS TO WELLNESS

People living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) are living longer and healthier lives than ever before. In fact, life expectancy is now 78 years[1]—similar to the U.S. national average.[2] 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.[3] Among those on antiretroviral therapy, smoking decreases life expectancy more than HIV itself.[4]



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.

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WHY QUIT SMOKING?

People living with HIV who quit smoking may reduce their risk for many serious illnesses and diseases such as: [5]

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	Osteoporosis or bone death[6]

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.[7] 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**
- **cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips**
- **smokefree.gov**

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Funded under contract #CG 22-10399.