Smokers are more likely to develop severe respiratory disease from COVID-19

Take the first step on your quit journey today and #QuitforCovid

The Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty has highlighted the risk to smokers from coronavirus. Now is a very important time to quit smoking to reduce your risk of infection.

Why are smokers at increased risk from COVID-19?

COVID-19 (coronavirus) is a respiratory infection that affects the lungs and airways. Smoking harms the immune system, lowering your body's natural protection against infections, like coronavirus.

The repeated action of putting your hand to your mouth when smoking also gives the virus an easy route into your body, increasing your risk of catching COVID-19.

New evidence from China is showing that smokers are 14 times more likely to develop severe respiratory disease from COVID-19. The infection is also likely to last longer and be more serious than it would be for non-smokers.

Coronavirus is even more dangerous if you have underlying health conditions like COPD and heart disease. Smokers with COPD or heart conditions are strongly advised to make a quit attempt. Quitting will reduce your risk from COVID-19 and the risk of serious COPD flare-ups.

Most smokers want to quit and in Sheffield, we help thousands of people to reach this goal each year. Many smokers are already taking the opportunity to #QuitForCovid. Join them and you will:

- Reduce your risk of getting respiratory infections like coronavirus.

- Protect your family from COVID-19 by shielding them from secondhand smoke which can also increase their chance of infection.

- Be less likely to suffer complications and have a better chance of a quicker recovery if you are infected.

- Reduce your risk of other health problems related to smoking, such as heart disease, COPD and stroke. This will support the NHS while it's under strain at this difficult time.

Once smokefree, there are very real health benefits, with the body continuing to repair the longer you stay smokefree.

Do

✓ Make a quit attempt as this is an important step you can take to reduce your risk from COVID-19.

✓ Get expert support. You'll be three times more likely to quit with expert support and use of Nicotine Replacement Therapy or Champix.

✓ Think about switching to e-cigarettes. There is currently no clear evidence that vaping increases your risk of COVID-19, but smoking tobacco definitely does.

✓ Keep your home a smokefree space to protect your family, particularly children, from the risks of secondhand smoke.

Don't

✗ Share cigarettes as this can spread the virus.

✗ Smoke shisha, cannabis or any other substance as it's not just cigarettes that increase your risk.

✗ Feel like you're in this alone, there is lots of support available to help you quit.

The Sheffield Stop Smoking Service is here for you.

Get in touch with Yorkshire Smokefree Sheffield today and #QuitForCovid

0800 612 0011 FREE from landlines

0330 660 1166 FREE from most mobiles

For online support or to request a callback visit: **sheffield.yorkshiresmokefree.nhs.uk**

Visit **smokefreesheffield.org** for more information

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