

## Smoking Affects Surgical Outcomes

Smoking cigarettes or other products with tobacco and/or other substances can affect healing. You may have decrease blood flow to the surgical area due to their use. They may also cause breathing problems and increase your risk for infections and complications. This is true for second hand smoke as well. Other tobacco products include:

- Snuff
- Chewing tobacco
- Electronic cigarettes
- Gum with nicotine
- Nicotine patches
- Fake marijuana such as K2 and Spice or any herbal smoking blend

Smoking affects more than your lungs and heart. The products found in cigarette smoke affect every part of your body. Nicotine does not cause cancer. However, nicotine and carbon monoxide are two of the many byproducts of smoking that affect your healing. They can also increase your risk for problems after surgery.



Your doctor may require you to stop smoking or using tobacco products 6-8 weeks before your surgery. **If you do not stop their use your surgery may be delayed or cancelled.**

### How Smoking May Affect Your Surgical Outcome

**Smoking may place you at greater risk of:**

- Less oxygen to blood supply
- Infection
- Blood clots
- Pneumonia

## For Your Safety



Your nicotine (or its byproducts) levels may be checked the day or a few days before surgery. **If the results are positive, your surgery will be cancelled automatically.**

Your saliva or urine may be checked for cotinine (a byproduct of nicotine). This test may be done before scheduling an elective surgery. Elective surgery is surgery that is not related to treating active cancer.

This may be a very stressful time for you. It is not easy to quit smoking. Professionals are available to help you quit smoking or using tobacco. Please speak with your doctor if you want help to quit smoking.

If have questions about MD Anderson's Tobacco Treatment Program, which is available at no cost to patients, please call 713-792-7848 or send an e-mail to [quitnow@mdanderson.org](mailto:quitnow@mdanderson.org).

## References

The Evils of Nicotine: An Evidenced-Based Guide to Smoking and Plastic Surgery, Brian Rinker, MD, FACS, *Annals of Plastic Surgery*. May 2013. Volume 70, Number 5. Retrieved from [www.annalsplasticsurgery.com](http://www.annalsplasticsurgery.com) on 11/27/2013

Risk Factors for Complications Differ Between Stages of Tissue-Expander Breast Reconstruction. Lovecchio F, Jordan SW, Kun S, Fine NA, Kim JY. *Annals of Plastic Surgery*. March 2014. Volume 00, Number 00. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24691330>

Tobacco-Control. Theadom, A; Cropley, M. Effects of Preoperative Smoking Cessation on the Incidence and Risk of Intraoperative and Postoperative Complications in Adult Smokers: A Systematic Review. <http://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/15/5/352.short>