



## **Smoking Among Adults in the United States: Cancer**

- ▶ Cancer is the second leading cause of death and was among the first diseases causally linked to smoking. (p. 39)
- ▶ Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death, and cigarette smoking causes most cases. (p. 61)
- ▶ Compared to nonsmokers, men who smoke are about 23 times more likely to develop lung cancer and women who smoke are about 13 times more likely. Smoking causes about 90% of lung cancer deaths in men and almost 80% in women. (p. 39)
- ▶ In 2003, an estimated 171,900 new cases of lung cancer occurred and approximately 157,200 people died from lung cancer. (p. 42)
- ▶ The 2004 Surgeon General's report adds more evidence to previous conclusions that smoking causes cancers of the oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, esophagus, lung, and bladder. (pp. 42, 62, 63, 116, 166)
- ▶ Cancer-causing agents (carcinogens) in tobacco smoke damage important genes that control the growth of cells, causing them to grow abnormally or to reproduce too rapidly. (p. 44–45)
- ▶ Cigarette smoking is a major cause of esophageal cancer in the United States. Reductions in smoking and smokeless tobacco use could prevent many of the approximately 12,300 new cases and 12,100 deaths from esophageal cancer that occur annually. (p. 119)
- ▶ The combination of smoking and alcohol consumption causes most laryngeal cancer cases. In 2003, an estimated 3,800 deaths occurred from laryngeal cancer. (p. 62)
- ▶ In 2003, an estimated 57,400 new cases of bladder cancer were diagnosed and an estimated 12,500 died from the disease. (p. 166)
- ▶ For smoking-attributable cancers, the risk generally increases with the number of cigarettes smoked and the number of years of smoking, and generally decreases after quitting completely. (pp. 39, 42)
- ▶ Smoking cigarettes that have a lower yield of tar does not substantially reduce the risk for lung cancer. (p. 61)
- ▶ Cigarette smoking increases the risk of developing mouth cancers. This risk also increases among people who smoke pipes and cigars. (p. 67)
- ▶ Reductions in the number of people who smoke cigarettes, pipes, cigars, and other tobacco products or use smokeless tobacco could prevent most of the estimated 30,200 new cases and 7,800 deaths from oral cavity and pharynx cancers annually in the United States. (p. 67)

## **New cancers confirmed by this report**

- ▶ The 2004 Surgeon General's report newly identifies other cancers caused by smoking, including cancers of the stomach, cervix, kidney, and pancreas and acute myeloid leukemia. (pp. 137, 167, 170, 183, 254, 324–325)
- ▶ In 2003, an estimated 22,400 new cases of stomach cancer were diagnosed, and an estimated 12,100 deaths were expected to occur. (p. 178)
- ▶ Former smokers have lower rates of stomach cancer than those who continue to smoke. (p. 182)
- ▶ For women, the risk of cervical cancer increases with the duration of smoking. (p. 169)
- ▶ In 2003, an estimated 31,900 new cases of kidney cancer were diagnosed, and an estimated 11,900 people died from the disease. (p. 166)
- ▶ In 2003, an estimated 30,700 new cases of pancreatic cancer were diagnosed, resulting in 30,000 deaths. The median time from diagnosis to death from pancreatic cancer is about 3 months. (p. 136)
- ▶ In 2003, approximately 10,500 cases of acute myeloid leukemia were diagnosed in adults. (p. 252)
- ▶ Benzene is a known cause of acute myeloid leukemia, and cigarette smoke is a major source of benzene exposure. Among U.S. smokers, 90 percent of benzene exposures come from cigarettes. (p. 252)

## **Citation**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2004.

**Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and has negative health impacts on people at all stages of life. It harms unborn babies, infants, children, adolescents, adults, and seniors.**