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## Tobacco's Hidden Costs: Health, Mind, and Economy

Tobacco continues to pose a significant and persistent threat to public health worldwide. Despite increased awareness and regulatory efforts, its use remains a leading cause of preventable illness and death, contributing to a wide range of serious health conditions, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory disorders. As we advance toward building healthier communities, it is essential to recognize the profound impact of tobacco on individual well-being and public health systems alike.



## What's in a Puff? Over 70 Known Carcinogens

Each puff of a cigarette delivers a toxic cocktail of chemicals—over 70 of which are known to be carcinogenic. They damage DNA, interfere with cell function, and significantly raise the risk of serious diseases.



Lungs suffer chronic inflammation, COPD, and cancer.



Brain endures reduced oxygen supply, leading to cognitive decline.



Heart faces an increased risk of heart attacks and strokes.



Mouth & throat become breeding grounds for oral cancers, particularly in users of smokeless tobacco.

## Second-hand Smoke: A Threat to the Young

Second-hand smoke also known as passive-smoke is the combination of smoke exhaled by a smoker and the smoke released from a burning cigarette. Even if someone isn't smoking directly, breathing in this toxic air puts them at serious risk.

Children and teens exposed to second-hand smoke are more likely to develop asthma, respiratory infections, and even lifelong cardiovascular issues. It also increases their chances of becoming smokers themselves, continuing a vicious cycle.



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## E-Cigarettes & Vaping: Harm Reduction or New Hazard?



**Potential Benefits:** For some adults trying to quit smoking, e-cigarettes may offer a less harmful alternative - but only if they fully switch.



**Risks & Concerns:** Vaping still exposes users to harmful chemicals. Plus, it's fuelling a new epidemic of nicotine addiction among youth, many of whom never smoked before.

## Addiction & Mental Health

Tobacco addiction doesn't just harm the body - it deeply affects the mind. Many people turn to smoking in moments of stress, believing it offers relief. But over time, tobacco use can intensify feelings of anxiety, low mood, and emotional imbalance. The short-term calm it provides masks long-term mental strain, creating a cycle that's hard to break.

**Highly Addictive:** Nicotine quickly creates dependence.



**False Relief:** Smoking may seem calming but worsens mental health over time.

**Mental Toll:** Tobacco use is linked to higher anxiety and depression.

## Economic & Social Impact



**Billions Lost:** Globally, tobacco-related illnesses and lost productivity cost over USD 1.4 trillion every year.



**Unequal Burden:** Low-income populations are hit hardest, both in health and in economic loss.



**Family Strain:** Illness, premature death, and medical bills place enormous stress on households and communities.



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## Tobacco Use in India



**29% of Indian adults use tobacco, making India the world's second-largest consumer.**



**Tobacco costs India ₹1.77 lakh crore annually-about 1% of its GDP.**



**Tobacco use causes approximately 1.35 million deaths in India every year.**

## The Global Picture (WHO)



**1.3 Billion Users Worldwide: 80% live in low and middle-income countries.**



**Economic Cost: \$1.4 trillion annually in combined health care and productivity losses.**



**Youth Targeting: The tobacco industry aggressively markets to teens-flavoured products, sleek designs, and digital campaigns.**

**Tobacco's harm is not always visible-but it's always real. Every puff, dip, or cloud of vapour has a cost. Protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community. Choose health.**



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