

# The Truth About Smoking

## Questions

Place a "T" at the end of the sentence if you think the statement is true. Place a "F" at the end of the sentence if you think the statement is false.

1. Smoking is harmful only if you smoke for a long time—20 or 30 years or more.
2. The same chemical that is used to kill rats is found in cigarettes.
3. Nicotine in tobacco is a highly addictive drug.
4. Young people who don't use cigarettes daily will not become addicted.
5. Low-tar and low-nicotine cigarettes are safe to smoke.
6. People who start smoking cigarettes after the age of 21 have a harder time quitting smoking than people who start at a younger age.
7. If you make it through your teens without smoking, it is likely that you will be "smoke-free" for life.
8. It's easier to start smoking than it is to quit.

# The Truth About Smoking

## Answers

1. Smoking is harmful only if you smoke for a long time—20 or 30 years or more.

**False.** Some diseases that are caused by smoking, such as lung cancer and heart disease, can take a long time to develop. But damage to your lungs starts with the first cigarette you smoke. That's why most people cough and feel dizzy, nauseous, or short of breath the first time they smoke.

2. The same chemical that is used to kill rats is found in cigarettes.

**True.** Cigarettes contain cyanide, a deadly poison that is used to kill rats. Other poisonous chemicals found in cigarettes include nicotine, which is used to kill insects.

3. Nicotine in tobacco is a highly addictive drug.

**True.** Nicotine is as addictive as heroin or cocaine.

4. Young people who don't use cigarettes daily will not become addicted.

**False.** There is no safe level of smoking. Any regular use of nicotine among young people can lead to addiction.

5. Low-tar and low-nicotine cigarettes are safe to smoke.

**False.** There is no safe, non-addictive cigarette. Cigars and smokeless tobacco are not safe alternatives to cigarettes.

## The Truth About Smoking

### Answers (continued)

6. People who start smoking cigarettes after the age of 21 have a harder time quitting smoking than people who start at a younger age.

**False.** People who start smoking before the age of 21 have the hardest time quitting. The younger people are when they start to smoke, the more likely they are to become strongly addicted to nicotine.

7. If you make it through your teens without smoking, it is likely that you will be “smoke-free” for life.

**True.** More than 80 percent of adult smokers started before they were 18 years old. Few people start to smoke once they are adults. So if you make it through your teens without smoking, you probably will never start.

8. It’s easier not to start smoking than it is to quit.

**True.** Three out of four teens who are daily smokers say they keep smoking because it’s really hard to quit.