FIVE SHOCKING SMOKING FACTS THAT WILL MAKE YOU KICK THE HABIT – TODAY.

Tobacco use is the largest preventable cause of death in the United States, yet it kills over 480,000 Americans each year. Plus, tobacco use is linked to four of the five leading causes of death in the US: heart disease, cancer, lung disease and stroke. Need another reason to quit? Here are five more—plus how to get the support you need to finally kick the habit.

A burning cigarette contains up to 7,000 chemicals

Cigarettes don’t just contain tobacco—they contain arsenic, cadmium, ammonia and formaldehyde, too. Out of the whopping 7,000 chemicals inside a cigarette, 70 of those chemicals are known to cause cancer.

Smoking changes your DNA

Yes, really! A study of nearly 16,000 smokers revealed that smoking can actually cause changes in your cells’ DNA—and some of those changes can last for as long as 30 years.

Tobacco may be a heart breaker

Smoking doesn’t just hurt your lungs—it can seriously damage your heart and increase your risk of high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke. How? Tobacco use increases blood pressure and blood clotting, and decreases exercise tolerance.
**Smoking can affect your brain function**

Cognitive functions, such as memory and attention, suffer from the effects of tobacco—and decline more rapidly in smokers. What's more? Smoking ups your risk for Alzheimer's disease and dementia by a whopping 79 percent.

**You can lose your sense of sight, taste and smell**

Studies have linked smoking to a loss of the senses, specifically your sense of sight, taste and smell. Smoking a risk factor for cataracts and its smoke can block your body's smell receptors. Smell and taste are closely linked, so it's no surprise that smoking can dull your sense of taste, too.

**How to kick the habit – for good**

It’s no secret: Quitting can be hard. Fortunately, you don’t have to go it alone. There are many resources to help you overcome your tobacco habit. Talk to your healthcare provider about treatment options and check out the resources from *Take Charge! Live Well!* and the Well-Being Connect Portal.