Living with HIV/AIDS
Celebrating Health and Wellness

Quitting Smoking is the single MOST important thing you can do to improve your health and quality of life, and extend longevity, besides taking your HIV medications as directed.

30 Years after the deadly AIDS virus was first discovered, medical research and antiviral medications have greatly prolonged the life expectancy of people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. But if you smoke this longevity and quality of life can be significantly reduced. Tobacco-related diseases are common causes of illness and death for people living with HIV/AIDS - there is increased risk of developing various cancers, as well as heart and lung diseases.

Some of the Facts:

- Smoking causes a reduction in immune function
- Smoking can interfere with the metabolism of HIV medications making them less effective
- People who are HIV+ and smoke may have a faster progression into AIDS, and develop more life-threatening and opportunistic diseases such as: bacterial and pneumocystis pneumonia, Human Papilloma Virus, Thrush, Oral Hairy leukoplakia (whitish mouth sores), and mycobacterium avium complex (a bacteria found in cigarette filters and papers after they are burned)
- HIV+ smokers are more likely to experience AIDS-related dementia
- HIV+ smokers develop emphysema 4 X faster than HIV negative smokers

Benefits of Quitting Smoking

- More money for things you want to do or purchase
- Reduction of other medications
- Less stress and more self confidence
- Food tastes better
- Better overall health and improved immunity

If You Want to Quit:

- Ask your doctor or case manager for help getting tobacco treatment medications such as nicotine patches and gum
- Join a quit smoking class or seek counseling support
- Call the CA Smokers’ Helpline at 1-800 NO-BUTTS
- Ask non-smoking friends to help and support you
- Hang out in more non-smoking environments
- Keep Trying Till You Quit - You Are Worth It. !