

Cigars

Cigars are tobacco rolls, wrapped in leaf tobacco or material that contains tobacco. The main difference between a cigar and a cigarette is that a cigarette is wrapped in paper and a cigar is wrapped in material that contains tobacco. There is less regulation on cigars than on cigarettes in the United States. For example, fruit and candy flavors can be added to a cigar, but not a cigarette. Cigars can be sold in smaller packages than cigarettes. Cigars are often taxed at a lower rate than cigarettes. Inexpensive fruit and candy-flavored cigars are popular among youth.



Although many people think cigars are less harmful than cigarettes, this is false! Smoking one large cigar can be the same as smoking an entire pack of cigarettes.

One large cigar may contain more than a half an ounce of tobacco and can take from 1 to 2 hours to smoke. Small or "little cigars" look a lot like cigarettes, except for their brown color. Little cigars are the same size as cigarettes, and may have filters. Cigarillos are slightly larger than little cigars. People tend to smoke cigarillos and inhale them like cigarettes. Flavors that increase appeal of cigars to children are added to many cigar products.

Who is smoking cigars?

About 5.2% of U.S. adults smoke cigars. Cigars have been popular among youth. Nearly 9% of boys and 6% of girls in high school and 2% of middle school students reported current cigar use in the 2016 National Youth Tobacco Survey. Low prices and candy flavors make cigars attractive to youth.

Is cigar smoking dangerous?

Cigar smoking is not safe. Cigars contain the same harmful toxic and cancer causing chemicals found in cigarettes. Regular cigar smoking causes other lung diseases such as COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), emphysema and chronic bronchitis. People who smoke cigars are at higher risk for lung cancer as well as many other kinds of cancer including; cancer of the esophagus, pancreas, bladder, lip, tongue, mouth,

and throat. People who smoke cigars also have an increased risk for heart disease. Cigar smoking is linked to gum disease and tooth loss. Tobacco use can lead to sexual impotence in men. Cigar smoking like cigarette smoke is harmful to pregnant women and their babies. Exposure to tobacco and nicotine in the womb and after birth increases the risk for many health problems in infants and children including stillbirth, prematurity, low birth weight, sudden infant death syndrome, wheezing and asthma, learning disabilities, and cancer.

What about secondhand and third hand cigar smoke?

Cigars contain more tobacco than cigarettes and often burn for a longer period, resulting in greater amounts of secondhand smoke (See also the ATS Patient Information Series handout on Second and Third Hand Smoke at www.thoracic.org/patients). This smoke includes smoke from the burning end of the cigar as well as the smoke that the smoker breathes out. Others can directly breathe in this secondhand smoke. The smoke and its poisons are also absorbed onto walls, carpeting, furniture, and other items. Children are exposed to this "third hand" smoke when they touch contaminated surfaces or when they inhale chemicals released into the environment from cigar smoke.

How can I stop smoking cigars?

Anyone can stop smoking tobacco. Many people have nicotine dependence, meaning that they need nicotine to feel normal. You can manage your nicotine

withdrawal with help. There are FDA approved medications that can make it much easier to stop smoking cigars and other forms of tobacco. The goal of treatment is to help you feel normal when not using tobacco. Nicotine patches, nicotine gum, and nicotine lozenges are available over-the-counter without a prescription. Other medications such as bupropion (brands: Zyban, Wellbutrin) and varenicline (brand: Chantix) are available by prescription. Electronic cigarettes are not recommended as they have not been shown to be effective in stopping tobacco use and there are increasing concerns about their dangers and harms to health. For more information on electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) see ATS handout at www.thoracic.org/patients/.



Cheap flavored cigars that are popular with youth are sold in many convenience stores and supermarkets.

Image has been adapted from Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/press_office/2016/2016_fda_rule/cigars

Cigars and Taxes

In most states, the taxes on cigars are less than the taxes on cigarettes. Lower prices due to lower taxes and smaller package sizes make many cigars products attractive to youth. Raising taxes on all forms of tobacco including cigars is one of the best ways to reduce smoking and protect our children.

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Rx Action Steps

- ✓ Talk to your children about the importance of being tobacco and nicotine free. Start from a young age – as soon as they can understand the concepts.
- ✓ Remember cigar smoke is hazardous to your health and those around you.
- ✓ Keep all tobacco smoke away from others, including children.
- ✓ Set a date and stop smoking all forms of tobacco including cigars.
- ✓ If you have a lapse when trying to stop, learn from it. Don't give up! Keep trying.
- ✓ Talk to your healthcare provider and get treatment for nicotine dependence.
- ✓ Find a local smoking cessation program by visiting <http://www.quitnet.com>.
- ✓ Call 1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669) for telephone counseling and information about help for stopping smoking in your state.

Healthcare Provider's Contact Number:

Resources to Help You Stop Using Tobacco:

American Thoracic Society

- <https://www.thoracic.org/patients/patient-resources/resources/resources-stop-using-tobacco.pdf>
- *Smell and Tell! Kids Respond to Candy-Flavored Tobacco* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfOixCuWHbU>

Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids

- *Not Your Grandfather's Cigar: A New Generation of Cheap and Sweet Cigars Threatens a New Generation of Kids.* <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/industry-watch/cigar-report>
- <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/us/state-tobacco-taxes>

National Cancer Institute

- <https://smokefree.gov/>

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/tobacco_industry/cigars/

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