



# healthy living

## fact sheet

### Tobacco Reduction

- In BC smoking accounts for approximately 6,000 deaths annually. That's 16 people each day.<sup>1</sup>
- Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in BC.<sup>2</sup>
- Smoking is responsible for 30% of all cancer-related deaths and more than 85% of lung cancer-related deaths.<sup>3, 4</sup>
- If 10% of BC smokers were to quit, it would save the BC economy \$2.9 billion over their lifetimes through reduced health care costs and avoided productivity losses due to premature mortality and illness.<sup>5</sup>
- Young adults aged 20-24 have the highest rate of smoking in BC, at 27%, while the prevalence of smokers in the 25-29 age group is 24%.<sup>6</sup>
- Second-hand smoke releases thousands of toxic chemicals into the air, more than 50 of which are known to cause cancer, including benzene, formaldehyde, cadmium and lead.<sup>8</sup>
- Research indicates a strong association between second-hand smoke and breast cancer, cervical cancer, stroke and miscarriage.<sup>9</sup>
- Smoking is a major cause of heart attacks, which is BC's number-one killer.<sup>11</sup>
- 90% of all cases of emphysema are caused by smoking.<sup>12</sup>
- The average two-pack-a-day smoker inhales one litre of tar into their lungs every year.<sup>13</sup>
- Each cigarette smoked takes seven minutes off one's life and on average, non-smokers live 15 years longer than smokers.<sup>14, 16</sup>

<sup>1</sup> British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency 2005 Selected Vital Statistics and Health Status Indicators. British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency, Victoria, BC.

<sup>2</sup> BC Healthy Living Alliance Tobacco Reduction Strategy

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2004 The health consequences of smoking: a report of the Surgeon General. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, Atlanta, GA.

<sup>4</sup> Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada 2003 Tobacco in Canada, vol. Available at: [http://www.smoke-free.ca/pdf\\_1/TOBACCOINCANADA2003.pdf](http://www.smoke-free.ca/pdf_1/TOBACCOINCANADA2003.pdf). Accessed April 21, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1999 Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs - August 1999. US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, Atlanta, GA.

<sup>6</sup> BC Healthy Living Alliance Tobacco Reduction Strategy

<sup>7</sup> de Groh M, Morrison HI 2002 Environmental tobacco smoke and deaths from coronary heart disease in Canada. *Chronic Dis Canada* 23(1):13-16.

<sup>8, 9</sup> Clean Air Coalition of BC website, [www.cleanaircoalitionbc.com/ktf\\_health\\_effects.html](http://www.cleanaircoalitionbc.com/ktf_health_effects.html)

<sup>10 - 16</sup> BC Ministry of Health website, [www.tobaccofacts.org/](http://www.tobaccofacts.org/)