

### Smoking increases the risk of post-surgical complications and of death

- smokers having surgery are 40% more likely to die within 30 days than non-smokers
  - smokers are also much more likely to experience serious, life-threatening complications after surgery (the odds of a heart attack increase by 80%, of the heart suddenly stopping by 57%, and of stroke by 73%)
  - smoking compromises the immune system and smokers are at higher risk of infections, with the risk doubling if someone smokes on the day of surgery. Pneumonia is especially common.
  - smokers are also more likely to be admitted into intensive care, and to be re-admitted into the hospital due to a medical emergency such as organ damage from blood poisoning
  - smokers are nearly two times more likely to need help to breathe during, or after, surgery
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### Smokers undergoing surgery experience additional complications

- smokers stay in hospital longer after surgery and are more likely to be admitted to intensive care
  - cigarette smoke reduces blood vessels' ability to carry oxygen, which causes smokers to heal more slowly and there is a 61% increase in the risk of a wound re-opening
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### Surgery outcomes are much better for those who are not smokers

- stopping smoking is the best thing you can do for your personal health, especially before surgery
  - research indicates that quitting even within two months of the surgery can significantly reduce your risk of complications. The risk could fall by 20% after four weeks of being tobacco-free
  - if you are not ready to quit, try to avoid smoking on the day of the operation
  - if you are considering cosmetic surgery, be aware that your surgeon can refuse to operate unless you quit smoking
  - consider what kind of stop smoking approach or support might work for you - surgery might provide you with a strong incentive to quit cigarettes and improve your long term health
  - consider contacting free, expert smoking cessation services such as Quit Your Way Scotland on 0800 84 84 84 ([you are more than three times more likely to quit with their help](#)) or your local pharmacy and GP - they can really increase your chances of success.
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