



Smoking and Disease

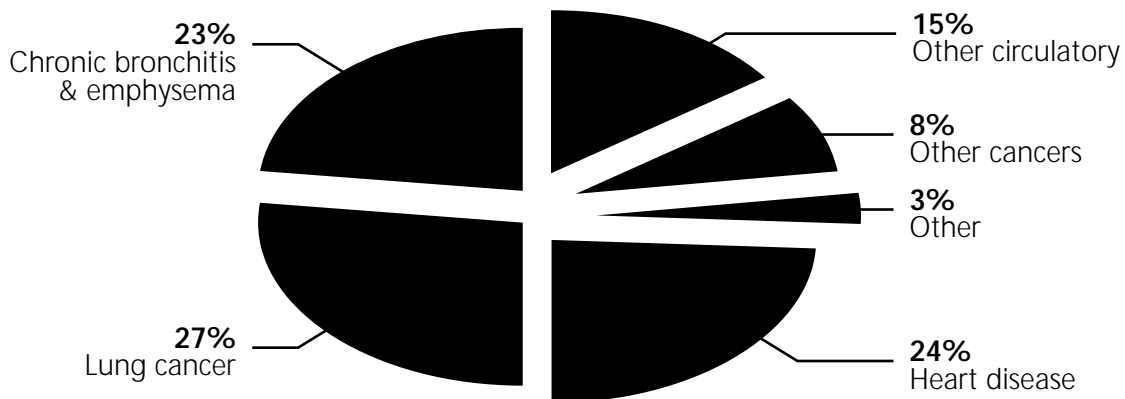
The Health Effects of Active Smoking

Over 57,000 reports have examined the relationship between smoking and disease¹. According to the US Surgeon General, "It is safe to say that smoking represents the most extensively documented cause of disease ever investigated in the history of biomedical research"².

Smoking is now identified as a major cause of heart disease, stroke, several different forms of cancer, and a wide variety of other health problems¹. The vast majority of deaths caused by smoking occur through the development of heart disease and lung cancer, followed by chronic bronchitis, stroke, peripheral vascular disease and other circulatory disease, and cancers other than the lung³. Around one third of all cancer deaths in Australia can be attributed to smoking⁴.

Cancers were the leading cause of death for men and women in 1993, representing 26.9% of all deaths. Ischaemic heart disease accounted for 24.5% of all deaths, and cerebrovascular disease (stroke) accounted for a further 10% of deaths⁵.

Proportion of deaths from smoking by disease group



Source: Compiled from English and Holman et al³.

¹ US Department of Health and Human Services. Reducing the Health Consequences of Smoking: 25 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General. Rockville, Maryland: US Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control, Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 1989. DHHS Publication No (CDC) 89-8411.

² US Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Benefits of Smoking Cessation. A Report of the Surgeon General. Rockville, Maryland: US Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control, Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 1990. DHHS Publication No (CDC) 90-8416.

³ English DR, Holman CDJ, Milne E, Winter MG, Hulse GK, Codde JP, Bower CI, Corti B, de Klerk N, Knuiman MW, Kurinczuk JJ, Lewin GF, Ryan GA. The quantification of drug caused morbidity and mortality in Australia, 1995 Edition. Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, 1995.

⁴ Giles G. The descriptive epidemiology of cancer in Australia. Cancer Forum 1991; 15: 3-9.

⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics. Causes of death, Australia 1993. Catalogue No 3303.0. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994.