Siletz Community

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Events

February CARE Program Logo Contest due by Feb. 25, 2022

Virtual Talking Circle
Feb. 16, 2022
5:30 pm

Virtual Book Club
Every Wednesday at 3:30 pm

February is American Heart Month

So how does smoking affect the heart? Let's start this conversation off with one of the 7,000 chemicals found in cigarette smoke, carbon monoxide.

What is carbon monoxide (CO)?

CO is a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas. CO, tar and nicotine are the main components of tobacco smoke. All represent some risk to your health. CO mainly affects the lungs, heart and blood vessels.

If I cut down on smoking, will this reduce my breath CO by an equivalent amount?

Probably not. A smoker may smoke fewer cigarettes, but will require the same amount of nicotine. Thus, you may smoke a smaller number of cigarettes more aggressively. As a result, you may continue to receive a similar amount of CO.

How does CO harm my body?

When tobacco smoke is inhaled into the lungs, CO passes through the lining of the lungs into the blood, where it becomes attached to the hemoglobin (Hb) - the oxygen carrier on red blood cells. These red blood cells normally carry oxygen, however, their chemical attraction to CO is greater than oxygen. So any CO in the blood pushes out oxygen, forming carboxyhemoglobin (COHb), thus putting extra strain on the heart.

Heart problems caused by CO

Heart: To compensate for the shortage of oxygen, the heart has to work harder to get enough oxygen to all parts of the body. The heart itself gets less oxygen, increasing the risk of heart damage.

Circulation: COHb causes the blood to thicken and the arteries to get coated with a thick, fatty substance. This causes high blood pressure and circulation problems, with increased risk of stroke and heart attack.

If you smoke, would you like to know what your CO level is?

If so, stop by Community Health at the Siletz Community Health Clinic and have your CO level measured. Using a CO monitor is super quick and easy; you will have your results before you know it.

Commercial Tobacco Quitline 1-800-QUIT-NOW

AI/AN Line now available 1-800-784-8669 (option 7)