

## Health Advice

### Can smoking affect my oral health?

Smoking is the greatest single cause of ill health and premature death in England.

There are many serious and often fatal diseases caused by smoking. The most common of these are:

- Coronary heart disease (accounted for 24,532 deaths in 1995)
- Lung cancer (accounted for 19,860 deaths in 1995)
- Chronic bronchitis and emphysema (accounted for 21,035 deaths in 1995)

These facts are now common knowledge but less well known are the serious effects of smoking on the tissues of the mouth. These include:

- Breath smelling of stale smoke
- Unsightly tar staining on the teeth
- Brown coating on the surface of the [tongue](#)
- Reduced resistance to [gum disease](#) which can result in premature tooth loss
- Smoker's keratosis, a premalignant lesion of the oral mucosa
- [Mouth cancer](#), about 2000 new cases in the UK per year