



GLOBAL TOBACCO USE AND CESSATION RESOURCES

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Global Tobacco Use

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), tobacco is the leading preventable cause of death in the world.¹ Tobacco use is a primary risk factor for a number of chronic diseases: cancers, lung diseases and cardiovascular diseases.

Estimates are that there are one billion smokers in the world, with over 80% living in low and middle income countries.² Total consumption of tobacco products is increasing worldwide, although it is decreasing in some high- and upper-middle income countries.³ If countries do not take measures to control tobacco use, the number of smokers globally would rise by almost 10% (from 794 to 872 million) in only 20 years.⁴ One person around the world dies every 6.5 seconds from tobacco use.³ If current trends continue, smoking will cause 6.4 million deaths annually by 2030.⁵

WHO believes that “regardless of size or income,” countries can take steps to “effectively address the tobacco epidemic and save lives.”

The connection between tobacco use, poor health and reduced productivity is well-documented both in the U.S. and globally. As a result, large employers are interested in eliminating tobacco use among employees. Tobacco cessation is increasingly being offered as a part of company-sponsored health benefits and wellness programs. Additionally, companies are increasingly establishing policies limiting or eliminating tobacco use at the worksite and on company-owned or leased properties.

[WHO Regional Databases](#)

Tobacco use and cessation is viewed differently around the world. To organize its resources, the World Health Organization divides the globe into five major regions. Regional databases provide information about tobacco-related issues like smoking prevalence, legislation, economics, cessation and general tobacco control policy.

- [African Region](#)
- [Region of the Americas](#)

- [European Region](#)
- [South-East Asia Region](#)
- [Western Pacific Region](#)

Electronic Cigarettes (e-cigarettes)

E-cigarettes are smoking simulation devices in which an element heats nicotine or non-nicotine flavored water releasing vapors for the user to inhale. Regardless, a dose of nicotine is delivered to the “smoker,” although that dosage amount varies in quantity and concentration by product. E-cigarettes are often marketed as an effective tool to help smokers quit. At this point, the short-and long-term effects of e-cigarettes are unknown. In 2009 the FDA raised concern that e-cigarettes “can increase nicotine addiction and may contain ingredients that are known to be toxic to humans.”⁶ The World Health Organization (WHO) strongly advises people not to use e-cigarettes until such time as a reputable national regulatory body finds them safe and effective.⁷

Global Tobacco Policies

Historically, tobacco control actions and activities occurred at the country level. A number of countries did pass legislation restricting tobacco advertising, regulating who can purchase and use tobacco products and where people could smoke.⁴ The smoking epidemic's globalization rendered this approach ineffective and slow. To organize global cessation efforts, the World Health Organization's (WHO) [Framework Convention on Tobacco Control \(FCTC\) treaty](#), the first of its kind to encourage countries to reduce tobacco-related deaths and disease around the world, was adopted unanimously by the World Health Assembly on May 21, 2003. It obligates countries to adopt policies that restrict tobacco advertising, sponsorship and promotion; create new labels and packaging for tobacco products; impose indoor air controls and make a commitment to reduce tobacco smuggling. More than 170 of the WHO's member states are parties to the Framework.

The World Health Organization states that: "The most cost-effective strategies are population-wide public policies, like bans on direct and indirect tobacco advertising, tobacco tax and price increases, smoke-free environments in all public and workplaces, and large clear graphic health messages on tobacco packaging."

Source: World Health Organization. *Why is tobacco a public health priority?* Available at: http://www.who.int/tobacco/health_priority/en/. Accessed May 23, 2011

- [List of countries who signed the treaty](#)

Global Tobacco Initiatives

[Tobacco Free Initiative \(TFI\)](#)

- TFI was established in July 1998 by the WHO to focus international attention, resources, and action on the global tobacco epidemic.
- The three main goals of TFI are to provide global policy leadership, promote the WHO Framework on Tobacco Control, and encourage worldwide collaboration to end tobacco use.
- The Initiative works closely with the WHO's regional offices, to plan and implement tobacco cessation activities in each of the countries.

[World No Tobacco Day](#)

WHO Member States created World No Tobacco Day in 1987 to bring worldwide attention to the tobacco epidemic and the health consequences that ensue from tobacco use. It is currently celebrated around the world every year on May 31st. Each year has a different theme to highlight the different issues to which tobacco is linked.

Resources

The Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health has developed free instructional training ([Global Tobacco Control: Learning from the Experts](#)) for policy makers, researchers, educators and the public about developing and implementing effective tobacco control programs, advocating for anti-smoking regulations and crafting media campaigns that make a difference. These materials are available in all six official United Nations languages.

[Millennium Development Goals and Tobacco Control](#)

This report discusses the importance tobacco control plays in completing each of the eight United Nations Millennium Development goals. It also outlines the increasingly high use of tobacco in the developing world, and the connection between tobacco use, poverty, and development.

[MPOWER](#)

The WHO created a series of cost-effective tobacco control measures to reduce tobacco use. MPOWER contains 6 components: 1) monitor tobacco use and prevention policies; 2) protect people from tobacco smoke; 3) offer help to quit tobacco use; 4) warn about the dangers of tobacco; 5) enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship; and 6) raise taxes on tobacco.⁸

Citations

1. World Health Organization. *Cancer*. Available at: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs297/en/index.html>. Accessed November 19, 2007.
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3. World Health Organization. *The tobacco health toll*. Available at: <http://www.emro.who.int/TFI/PDF/TobaccoHealthToll.pdf>. Accessed October 17, 2007.
4. World Health Organization. *WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC)*. Available at: <http://www.who.int/fctc/en/>. Accessed July 23, 2008.
5. Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. *The path to smoking addiction starts at very young ages*. Available at: <http://tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0127.pdf>. Accessed September 14, 2007.
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7. World Health Organization. Tobacco Free Initiative. *Questions and answers on electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) or electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)*; 2013.
8. World Health Organization. *MPOWER*. Available at: http://www.who.int/cancer/prevention/tobacco_implementation/mpower/en/. Accessed March 20, 2014.