



Smoking

Gay and bisexual men are twice as likely than non-gay men to smoke cigarettes. Lesbians are more likely to be heavy smokers than are non-gay women. Transgender folks have the highest smoking rates within the LGBT community, and smoking inhibits healing after sexual reassignment surgery.

Although, we don't know all the reasons for our high smoking rates, we can point to several factors. Many people in the LGBT community socialize in a "bar" culture, where smoking is permitted and highly accepted. We also know that the LGBT community experiences higher levels of anxiety from discrimination, which can be alleviated by smoking cigarettes. Some of us believe smoking is glamorous and sexy.

What we do know is that our high smoking rates put us a higher risk of tobacco-related health problems including heart disease, lung cancer, and esophageal and breast cancer. Smoking increases the risk of blood clots in transwomen who take estrogen, and it increase the risk of heart disease in transmen who take testosterone. Together, we can decrease tobacco use in our community in addition to advocating for funding more research on LGBT smoking and for providing more programs for preventing our younger people from starting to smoke in the first place.

IF YOU SMOKE, HERE ARE SOME STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH:

- Take steps to quit today.
- Set a target date and specific plan for quitting.
- If you are planning surgery, it may be a good time to quit.
- Identify specific ways to deal with temptations – especially when you go out.
- Consult a doctor to decide if the patch or other medicines might help you.
- Call your local LGBT health center to find about smoking cessation programs for you.
- Finally, get support from family, friends and other support networks in your community.

HELPFUL WEBSITES : www.glbthealth.org/documents/GLBTTobacco.pdf • www.metrokc.gov/health/glbtf/
www.gaysmokeout.net • www.ttac.org • www.iqquit.medschool.ucsf.edu • www.lgbthealth.net

don't do it alone. with your dedication and support from your family,
friends and community, you can quit smoking.



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LGBT HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK
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