Opposing Viewpoints in Context

Reference Article Tutorial

Viewpoint articles, topic overviews, statistics, primary documents, selected web links, and full-text periodical articles on social issues.

At home you will need the Gale Databases user name and password from the library’s Gold Sheet.
Select Reference
Type in your **topic** in the Search Reference box.
As you type, Search Assist will list keywords.
There are 127 Reference articles about smoking.
Limit your search to Topic Overview
You may then choose to refine by subject.
Scroll through the list to find a suitable article on your reading level.
The **yellow square** indicates **Intermediate** Content Level.
The red triangle indicates Advanced Content Level.
The green circle indicates Basic Content Level.
Click on the title to skim read the article.
Tobacco

.Alcohol, Tobacco, and Illicit Drugs, 2010

In the mid-20th century smoking in the United States was often associated with romance, relaxation, and adventure; movie stars oozed glamour on screen while smoking, and movie tough guys were never more masculine than when lighting up. Songs such as "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" topped the hit parade. Smoking became a rite of passage for many young males and a sign of increasing independence for women.

Since the 1990s, however, there has been an increase of opposition to tobacco use. Health authorities warn of the dangers of smoking and chewing tobacco, and nonsmokers object to secondhand smoke—because of both the smell and the health dangers of breathing smoke from other people's cigarettes. In the first decade of the 21st century, a smoker is more likely to ask for permission before lighting up, and the answer is often "no." Because of health concerns, smoking has been banned on airplanes, in hospitals, and in many workplaces, restaurants, and bars. In 2008, 82% of respondents to a Gallup poll believed that cigarette smoking was very harmful to adults who smoke. (See Figure 3.1:

Public opinion on the harmfulness of smoking, 2003-08

In general, how harmful do you feel smoking is to adults who smoke?

- % Very harmful
- % Somewhat harmful
- % Not very harmful
- % Not at all harmful

80 60 50 40 30 20 10 0
**Physical Properties of Nicotine**

Tobacco is a plant native to the Western Hemisphere. It contains nicotine, a drug class that, although it has some depressive effects as well. Nicotine is a poisonous alkaloid that is psychoactive (mood-altering) ingredient in tobacco. (Alkaloïds are carbon-and-nitrogen-containing compounds that are found in some families of plants. They have both poisonous and medicinal effects.)

Nicotine's effects on the body are complex. The drug affects the brain and central nervous system, such as the hypothalamus and pituitary glands of the endocrine (hormone) system. Nicotine enters the body through the blood-brain barrier (a series of capillaries and cells that controls the flow of substances from the bloodstream to the brain), and it accumulates in the brain—faster than caffeine or heroin, but slower than the drug amphetamine used to treat anxiety. In the brain, nicotine imitates the actions of the neurotransmitters and neuromodulators, both of which heighten the sense of alertness.

Nicotine also triggers the release of dopamine, which enhances feelings of pleasure or well-being, and dopamine, which have a calming effect.

As noted earlier, nicotine acts both as a stimulant and a depressant. By exciting certain nerve cells in the spinal cord, nicotine relaxes the nerves and slows some reactions. For example, it's the knee-jerk reflex. Small amounts of nicotine stimulate some nerve cells, but these cells become depressed by large amounts of nicotine. In addition, nicotine stimulates the brain cortex (the outer layer of the brain) and affects the functions of the nervous system.

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**Trends in Tobacco Use**

Cigarettes

Consumption Data.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in "The National Tobacco Control Program" (Chronic Disease Notes and Reports, vol. 14, no. 3, Fall 2001), the consumption of cigarettes, the most widely used tobacco product, has decreased over the past generation among adults. After increasing consistently for 60 years, the per capita (per person) consumption of cigarettes peaked in the 1960s at well over 4,000 cigarettes per year. The steady decline in smoking came shortly after 1964, when the *Smoking and Health: Report of the Advisory Committee to the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service* (1964, http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NNB/B/BM/QI/nbbcmq.pdf) concluded that cigarette smoking is a cause of many forms of lung cancer and a probable cause of lung cancer in women, and the most important cause of chronic bronchitis in both genders.
Source Citation information for your Works Cited is included at the end of the article.
Tobacco

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Public opinion on the harmfulness of smoking, 2005-09

- % Very harmful
- % Somewhat harmful
- % Not harmful at all

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- Stopping Smoking

Go back to your results
Current smoking among adults, 1997–2007

Or, look at Related Subjects
If you are unhappy with your results, go back to the Pathfinder to search the next database.
Be sure to consult the Printing Tutorial before printing your article!