

# Worried About Your COVID-19 Risk?

American  
Lung Association.  
Minnesota



Did You Know?

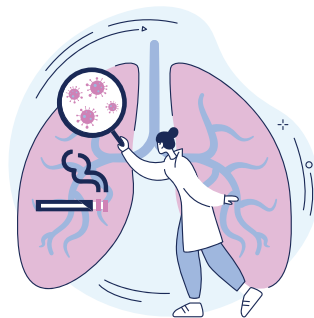
People who smoke are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. It is an ideal time to address your tobacco use.

# Smoking is firmly linked to severe illness from COVID-19.<sup>1</sup>

To smoke or vape, a person must remove their face mask which puts the individual and others at risk for COVID-19. They also touch their face and mouth more often, which may increase the risk of spreading or contracting COVID-19.

Cigarette smoking leads to more severe illness from COVID-19 because:

- It compromises the immune system.<sup>2</sup>
- It is linked to lung inflammation and infection.<sup>2</sup>
- It harms the airway lining (cilia), the essential defenders against viruses.<sup>3</sup>
- People who smoke have more ACE2 receptors, the ‘doorway’ to get into our lungs.<sup>4</sup>



**Now is an important time to address your tobacco use.**

**Lung Mind**  
Alliance

Your counselor or other health care provider is here to support you. Ask them for assistance quitting tobacco.

*Tobacco in this document refers specifically to the use of manufactured commercial tobacco products, and not to the sacred, medicinal, and traditional use of tobacco by American Indians and other groups.*

#### References:

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2. US Department of Health and Human Services. (2014). The Health Consequences of Smoking – 50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General.
3. Spira, Avrum, Jennifer Beane, Vishal Shah, Gang Liu, Frank Schembri, Xuemei Yang, John Palma, and Jerome S Brody. "Effects of Cigarette Smoke on the Human Airway Epithelial Cell Transcriptome." Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America. National Academy of Sciences, July 6, 2004. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC454179/>.
4. Smith, Joan C., Erin L. Sausville, Vishruth Grish, Monet Lou Yuan, Anand Vasudevan, Kristen M. John, and Jason M. Seltzer. "Cigarette Smoke Exposure and Inflammatory Signaling Increase the Expression of the SARS-CoV-2 Receptor ACE2 in the Resp