

Letter and fact sheet I used in my practice

Dear Patient,

As your physician, I am concerned about your smoking addiction. By this letter I want to be sure that you are aware of the facts about smoking and the health risks you are taking by continuing to smoke.

Firstly, smokers are ten times as likely to die of lung cancer as nonsmokers. The odds are even higher, as much as 20 to 1, for people who smoke a lot, inhale deeply, or who have been smoking a long time. The odds will go down if you quit smoking, so that after 15 years it will be almost as though you had never smoked.

Lung cancer is only one cancer associated with cigarette smoking; others are cancers of the larynx, oral cavity, esophagus, bladder, pancreas, and kidney. Altogether, 130,000 cancer deaths, or 30% of all deaths from cancer, are caused by smoking.

Secondly, cigarette smoking causes 170,000 deaths from coronary heart disease every year. Smoking actually doubles one's chances of heart disease in general. Men aged 45 to 54 who smoke are almost three times as likely to die of a heart attack as men of that age who do not smoke.

Thirdly, cigarette smoking is the major cause of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (emphysema and chronic bronchitis). Approximately 80,000 persons will die of these preventable diseases this year.

Cigarette smoking is a "disease" which contributes to the premature death of 365,000 Americans every year (one out of every six deaths). In comparison, motor vehicle accidents account for approximately 50,000 deaths each year.

The good news is that once smokers quit, the risk of heart disease begins to drop. After ten years, for pack-a-day smokers, the risk is no greater than for those who have never smoked.

Date_____ Doctor_____

Please acknowledge by signing below that you have read the above and that you understand the risks you are taking by continuing to smoke and that I have advised you to quit smoking.

Date_____ Patient_____

Charles H. Pierce, MD, PhD. Pierce, MD, PhD