



## Up in smoke

### Description

**World No Tobacco Day on 31 May is a reminder of the health risks of smoking, and how quitting the habit can add years to your life expectancy.**

South Africa faces a significant tobacco and nicotine addiction crisis, with alarming usage rates across age groups. According to the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) 2021 and the South African Department of Health, 29% of adults over 18 and 23,9% of youth aged 15-24 use tobacco products. Additionally, 18% of the population suffers involuntary exposure to second-hand smoke.

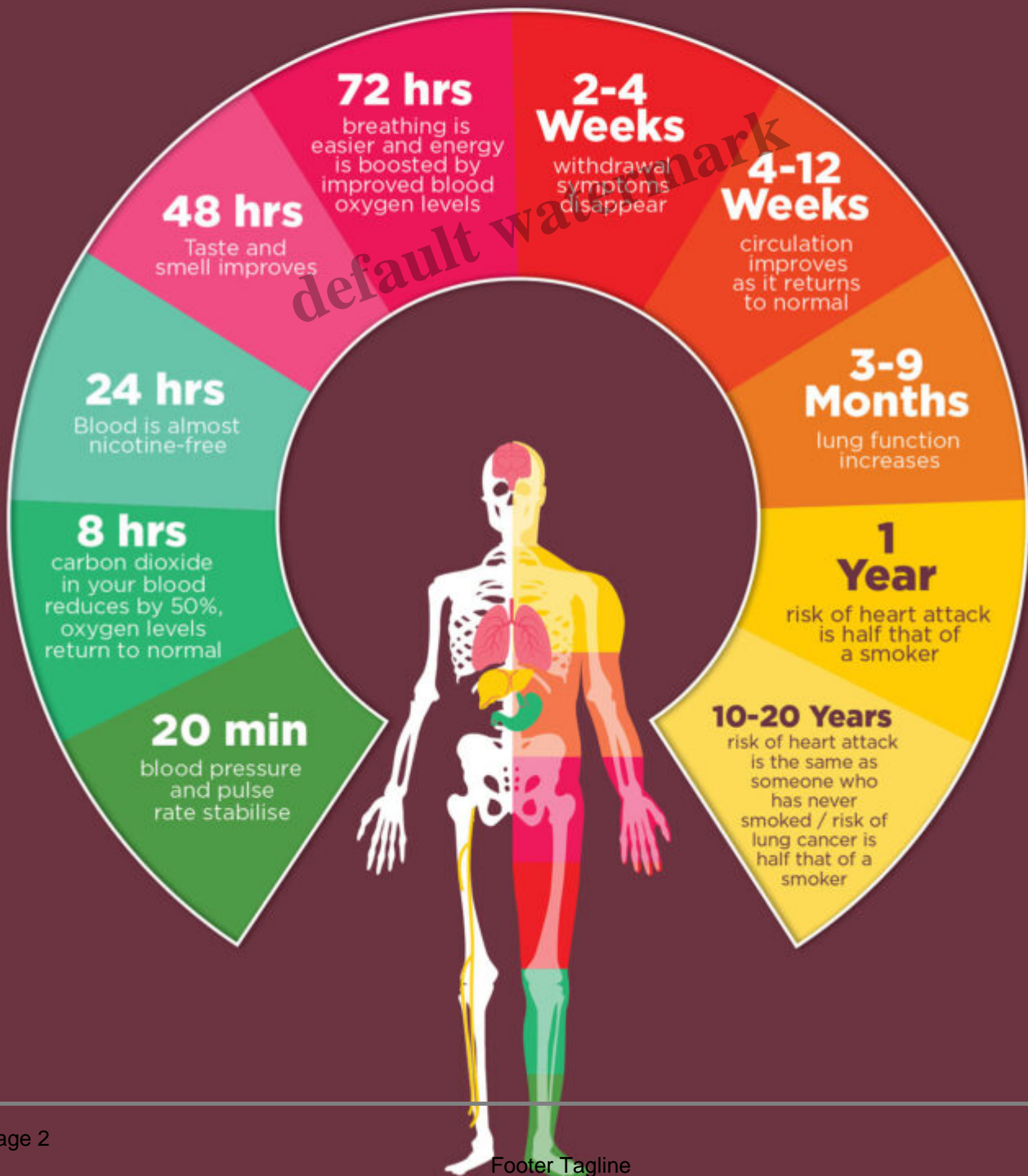
Vaping has also emerged as a particular concern among younger South Africans, with research published in The Lancet's EClinicalMedicine portal revealing that 16,8% of high-school pupils reported vaping in the 30 days prior to the survey. This prevalence increased to 29,5% among matriculants, with some schools reporting vaping rates as high as 46%.

A survey by the Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA) found approximately one in five people (19%) with no prior smoking history began smoking traditional cigarettes after using e-cigarettes.

Tobacco use significantly increases the risk of serious health conditions, including (but not limited to) lung cancer, heart disease and stroke. But quitting brings the promise of renewed health.

# Countdown to health

The human body is remarkably resilient. Within minutes of quitting smoking, your body starts to regenerate your health and within a matter of years, your risk of heart disease and cancer can drop to nearly that of a non-smoker.



## Sources

Tobacco Control Data Initiative, [tobaccocontroldata.org](http://tobaccocontroldata.org)

SA Department of Health, [Department of Health](#)

The Cancer Association of South Africa, <https://cansa.org.za/>

## Category

1. Our Wellness

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