

Living Tobacco-Free

An informative resource guide for people who are ready to quit smoking or stop using smokeless tobacco products



BLOUNT COUNTY

Community
Health Initiative

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION
ACTION TEAM

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Smoking or using smokeless tobacco is the No. 1 cause of preventable, premature death in the United States, causing more than 393,000 deaths each year. If you use tobacco, you can reduce your risk of an early death and greatly improve your overall health by quitting. And if you have a family, the benefits of quitting are even greater.

According to the American Lung Association, cigarette smoke contains more than 4,800 chemicals, 69 of which are known to cause cancer. People who smoke at home, in their vehicles and at family gatherings, expose their children and other relatives to the health hazards of cigarette smoke.

Even when you recognize the harmful effects of tobacco use, it can be extremely difficult to quit. Nicotine, the addictive agent found in cigarettes, causes a physical craving for tobacco. In addition, tobacco users connect their habit with social activities and daily routines, creating a mental or emotional addiction.

So while no one is pretending that quitting is easy, it is possible—with help. Becoming tobacco-free requires discipline, determination and support tools, as well as the help of co-workers, friends and family. According to the latest American Cancer Society data, only about 4 to 7 percent of people are able to quit smoking without medicines or other help.

FAST FACT

Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body, and it is a main cause of lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD, including chronic bronchitis and emphysema). It also is a cause of coronary heart disease, stroke and a variety of other cancers and diseases.

To increase your chances for success, Blount Memorial Hospital and the Blount County Community Health Initiative have created this helpful *Living Tobacco-Free* resource guide. Use the information in the booklet to create a realistic plan for quitting, get the support you need to succeed and start enjoying the health benefits of a tobacco-free life.

25 Reasons To Quit

Can you remember why you decided to start smoking? Whatever the reason, it doesn't matter any more. What matters now is your health. Choosing to stop using tobacco products is the best investment you can make in your health, your future and your quality of life. If you're still not convinced, take a look at these 25 Reasons to Quit.

Quitting smoking:

- 1 Reduces the risk of premature death
- 2 Lowers the risk of disability and death from coronary heart disease and smoking-related lung diseases
- 3 Decreases the risk of stroke and dying from stroke
- 4 Helps alleviate chronic irritation of the larynx caused by smoking, which may improve voice quality
- 5 Reduces the risk of larynx, mouth, esophagus, tongue and lip cancers
- 6 Decreases the risk of ulcers
- 7 Reduces lung cancer risk
- 8 Significantly decreases the frequency and severity of asthma episodes
- 9 For women taking birth control pills, eliminates the risk of negative side effects related to smoking
- 10 For pregnant women and those planning a pregnancy, reduces the risk of having a low-birth weight baby
- 11 Improves sense of smell and taste
- 12 Eliminates the smell of cigarette smoke and tobacco from the hair, clothing, car and home
- 13 Saves money (*more than \$150 per month for a former pack-a-day smoker paying an average of \$5 per pack*)
- 14 Improves circulation
- 15 Increases energy and stamina
- 16 Decreases shortness of breath and coughing

- 17 Reduces the risk of emphysema, bronchitis, asthma, pneumonia, flu and colds
 - 18 Provides a possible tax deduction
 - 19 Reduces life, health and home insurance premiums
 - 20 Expands opportunities for recreation, employment and dining out
 - 21 Improves appearance (whiter teeth and brighter skin)
 - 22 For parents, increases the chances your children will never smoke
 - 23 Reduces fire risk
 - 24 Improves overall health and quality of life
 - 25 Provides a renewed sense of control over one's life, health and future
-

How Quitting Helps Your Baby

Learning that you are going to have a baby can be a time of great joy, yet also can cause stress and anxiety. For pregnant women who smoke, thinking about quitting during their pregnancy may seem overwhelming.

Quitting is difficult, but it also is the most important change women in the United States can make to prevent unhealthy pregnancies. According to the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General, stopping smoking offers pregnant women and their babies the best chance for a healthy start.

When a pregnant woman stops smoking, her unborn baby:

- gets more oxygen
- has a decreased chance of being born prematurely or too small
- is less likely to be born with health problems, such as asthma
- is more likely to survive (*smoking increases the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth and infant death*)



ARE YOU READY TO QUIT?

Take this quick quiz to discover if you have what it takes to be a successful quitter. Answer “yes” or “no” to the following questions:

YES **NO** Do you want to quit using tobacco for yourself?

Why it matters: If another person has asked you to quit, you may not be fully committed to quitting. To quit successfully, you have to put yourself first. It may sound selfish, but wanting to quit for your own health and future will increase your chances for long-term success.

YES **NO** Is quitting your No. 1 priority?

Why it matters: Quitting isn't easy. Breaking a tobacco addiction requires your total attention. If you are juggling multiple responsibilities or dealing with a lot of life stressors right now, this might not be the ideal time to try to quit.

YES **NO** Have you tried to quit before?

Why it matters: If you've tried to quit, you have a better understanding of how difficult it can be, and can appreciate why it is so important to ask for help. The lessons learned during your previous quit attempt will help increase your chance of success this time.

YES **NO** Will you be patient if you backslide in your efforts to quit?

Why it matters: Changing any habit—especially one fueled by an addictive agent like nicotine—is a frustrating process. You will have good days and bad days. Sticking with your quit plan even when you backslide requires patience. When successful quitters slip up, they forgive, forget and move on. Keeping your eyes focused on the long-term goal helps you overcome the obstacles along the way.

YES **NO** Are you committed to quitting even though it may be tough at first?

Why it matters: By now, you realize that wanting to quit isn't enough to break an addiction to nicotine. Being a successful quitter takes courage and perseverance. Before embarking on a quit plan, you have to be committed to seeing it through no matter how irritable, anxious or uncomfortable the withdrawal process makes you feel.

YES NO Do you believe that using tobacco is hazardous to your health?

Why it matters: If one of your reasons for quitting is health-related, the health benefits experienced starting the first day you quit can help keep you motivated. If you're not concerned about the health hazards of smoking, you are less likely to stay on track when the going gets tough.

YES NO Are your family members, friends and co-workers willing to help you quit?

Why it matters: Having a strong support network increases your chances for success. When the people in your life continue to offer you tobacco products, smoke in your presence or criticize you for wanting to quit, it can be impossible to quit successfully.

YES NO Do you have personal reasons (unrelated to health) for wanting to quit?

Why it matters: Studies have shown that successful quitters have multiple reasons for wanting to quit. For many quitters, wanting to set a good example for their children or protect the health of a child or unborn child is the No. 1 reason for quitting. For others, giving up tobacco products is a practical step taken to get or keep a job, find housing or save money.

What Your Score Means

If you answered "NO" to four or more of the questions, you may need more time and more information about the benefits of quitting. To get started, read through this guide and explore the helpful websites listed on page 13.

If you answered "YES" to five or more of the questions, you are ready to quit. To get started, use the resources in this guide to create a successful quit plan.

CREATING A SUCCESSFUL QUIT PLAN

There's no right or wrong way to quit smoking. Success depends on a number of factors, beginning with a realistic quit plan. This plan should include a timeline for quitting, as well as the strategies and resources you will use to help achieve your goal.

Your quit plan could include:

- 1 A future quit date that allows ample time to phase out tobacco use gradually
- 2 Milestones to achieve at one week, one month, three months, six months and one year of your plan
- 3 Specific rewards for achieving your incremental goals
- 4 Joining a group or online tobacco-cessation class
- 5 Consulting with a professional tobacco cessation facilitator
- 6 Talking to your doctor or health care provider about nicotine replacement products or prescription medications designed to help people quit smoking
- 7 Strategies for coping with withdrawal symptoms
- 8 Asking family, friends and co-workers to support your efforts to quit
- 9 Eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly
- 10 Creating a calendar of activities (or trying new activities) that you do not associate with tobacco use
- 11 Drinking plenty of water and cutting back on alcohol and caffeine
- 12 Committing to persevere through challenges, setbacks and relapses

How a Smoker's Diary Can Help

Designing a customized quit plan requires understanding when and why you smoke. By recognizing your smoking "triggers," you can focus on support resources and strategies that might work best for you. One of the best tools in this process is a smoker's diary. Use a notebook, your computer or smart phone to keep track of when you smoke during the day. Note what feelings, emotions, surroundings or other factors influence your decision to smoke (such as hunger, stress, social gatherings). Keep the diary for several days, and then review your notes to look for patterns. Use your research to create a personalized quit plan.

QUICK QUIT TIPS

Clear your home, vehicle, office, and purse or briefcase of cigarettes, chewing tobacco, ashtrays, lighters and matches.

Change your routine to avoid “smoking situations.” For example, avoid designated smoking areas at work, or take a walk after a meal instead of lingering at the table.

Feed the need to have something to chew or puff on by munching on cinnamon sticks, celery or carrot sticks, or sticks of sugarless gum. Chewing on toothpicks, straws or stir sticks also can help, if you discard them promptly when they wear down or break.

Brush your teeth after each meal.

Drink lots of fluids, except caffeinated and alcoholic drinks, which can trigger the desire to use tobacco.

Breathe deeply when the urge to use tobacco products hits. Hold your breath, release it slowly and repeat. Deep breathing produces a calming effect that can help you relax and resist the urge to smoke.



One Smoke-Free Day at a Time

The urge to light up a cigarette is going to be with you for a while after you’ve given up smoking. Small urges may crop up for the rest of your life, so you’re going to have to learn to deal with them. Just as you learned how to smoke, you have to learn how not to smoke.

Start Small

Don’t look too far ahead when you’re in the beginning stages of quitting. Break the day into segments and concentrate on getting through a few hours at a time without smoking. When you make it through one stretch successfully, go on to the next and then the next. Let your first victories be small ones. All of your small victories will add up to the big one—quitting smoking forever.

Choose Smoke-Free Destinations

Many cities limit or completely ban smoking in public buildings, stores, elevators, theaters and restaurants. These regulations make it easier to avoid smokers and smoke-filled environments. If you are in a place where smoking is allowed, choose the smoke-free section. Not having the option to smoke will help you stay on track.

Change Your Routine

By this time, you should know exactly what situations trigger your desire for smoking. For many people it's a cup of coffee or the end of a meal, for others it is drinking alcohol, and still others want to smoke when they are talking on the phone or driving.

Sometimes you can avoid these triggers entirely, but often you have to change your behavior. If coffee or alcohol means cigarettes to you, then avoid them, at least temporarily. Drink fruit juice, water or decaffeinated soda instead. Stay away from places and gatherings where alcohol is served. Take a walk during your coffee break.

Many smokers enjoy a cigarette after a meal. Instead of lighting up, leave the table as soon as you're finished. Clear the dishes, brush your teeth or walk around the block. Keep your mind off cigarettes, and take up new post-meal activities.

Fill the Void with Healthy Alternatives

There's going to be some emptiness in your life once cigarettes are gone. To keep your hands busy, try holding a pencil or rolling a toothpick through your fingers. For oral gratification, chew a toothpick or keep a supply of celery, carrots or sugarless gum nearby. Occupy your free time with activities that don't allow you to hold a cigarette such as exercise, housework, handiwork, gardening, hobbies or washing the car. Keep your hands and mind busy, and don't dwell on the fact that you're not smoking.

If smoking had a calming influence, create the same result by breathing deeply or imagining yourself away from the temptation of smoking. When stress closes in, pretend you're relaxing on a beach, walking in the woods or hiking in the mountains. Learn to switch the signals that trigger your urges.

Don't Give Up

You can do this. It won't be easy at first, but each day you are tobacco-free will make it a little easier. Develop your own strategies to carry you through the tough times. By taking a one-day-at-a-time approach, you can—and will—become an ex-smoker for life.

GOING COLD TURKEY

For some people, the best quit plan involve only one step: quitting. Giving up tobacco (or another addictive habit) suddenly without the benefit of a gradual withdrawal period, medical help or a progressive cessation program is called “going cold turkey.” The phrase is thought to come from a 1915-1920 American slang term used to describe talking bluntly about something that is unpleasant. Going cold turkey certainly can be unpleasant, but it can work for tobacco users who are goal-oriented and disciplined. If you believe you have the self-control and desire to quit on your own, here are six helpful tips.

- 1 Be realistic.** Going cold turkey is tough. The longer you have used tobacco, the tougher it is going to be. Understanding the powerful grip nicotine has on your body can help prepare you for what's ahead. Nicotine withdrawal symptoms may include irritability, restlessness, drowsiness, headache, digestive discomfort and a strong craving for nicotine. The good news is that all of these symptoms will begin to fade over time, peaking typically on the third day after quitting and then disappearing gradually.
- 2 Breathe deeply.** When you experience a craving or unpleasant withdrawal symptom, inhale deeply through the nose, then exhale slowly through pursed lips. Breathing deeply helps you relax and can relieve overall tension and irritability.
- 3 Add water.** Drinking water throughout the day helps wash nicotine out of your system, as well as curb the craving for nicotine.
- 4 Get moving.** Exercise improves heart and lung function, while helping diminish the desire to use tobacco. In addition, staying physically active helps counteract any weight gain associated with quitting smoking. Aerobic exercises such as walking, running and swimming are particularly helpful.
- 5 Change your routine.** When you're a smoker, specific times of day, people, activities and locations are associated with tobacco use. When you give up tobacco, give your daily routine a tobacco-free makeover. If drinking a cup of coffee was followed by a cigarette in the past, switch to fruit juice instead to help break the connection. Keep busy, and try new activities to avoid situations likely to trigger tobacco use (or an overwhelming craving for tobacco).
- 6 Celebrate.** Give yourself a little reward when you make it through a day or week without tobacco. Your greatest reward will be living tobacco-free, but getting there and staying there takes days, weeks and months of small victories. Treat yourself to a special dinner, a new outfit or concert tickets to help make the tough times a little easier to take.

BREAKING THE NICOTINE ADDICTION

Whether you choose to go cold turkey or take a more gradual approach toward tobacco cessation, it's important to understand how nicotine affects your body. Nicotine is a drug with three powerful addictive aspects:

Physical: When you use tobacco, you develop a physical addiction to nicotine. The body begins to depend on nicotine to feel good. Smoking releases the brain's "feel good" messengers. Over time, it becomes harder to produce these messengers naturally, so you rely on smoking even more to relieve stress, improve mood and calm anxiety.

Behavioral addiction: If you notice that you smoke when you are nervous or bored, it's likely you have a behavioral addiction to smoking. The act of smoking becomes a highly addictive behavioral habit because it gives you something to do with your hands and mouth, which can be comforting or distracting.

Social addiction: Smoking is typically related to specific triggers such as finishing a meal or driving. Breaking this social addiction requires switching your normal routine and creating healthy alternatives for unavoidable situations that could trigger a craving.

Withdrawal Survival Kit

Breaking a nicotine addiction requires overcoming powerful withdrawal symptoms. Help yourself stay on track by creating a portable survival kit to keep your mouth and hands busy. Your kit should include:

low-calorie snacks like carrots, celery sticks and fruit

safe items to chew on, such as sugarless gum, toothpicks and straws

things to keep your fingers busy like a smart phone, knitting or crossword puzzle



TOP 10 REASONS NOT TO CHEW

Chewing tobacco is not a safe alternative to smoking. Using chewing tobacco can lead to nicotine dependence and addiction, increases cancer risk and causes numerous health problems.

For a quick overview of how chewing tobacco affects the body, take a look at these top 10 reasons not to chew.

- 1** Chewing tobacco can cause cancer of the mouth (including the lip, tongue, cheek, and floor and roof of the mouth) and the throat.
- 2** Some of the poisons from tobacco can get into the stomach lining, throat and bladder, causing cancer in these locations.
- 3** People who use eight to 10 dips or chews daily receive the same amount of nicotine as people who smoke 30 to 40 cigarettes a day.
- 4** Spit tobacco contains more than 3,000 chemicals, including about 28 chemicals known to cause cancer.
- 5** Like smoking, using spit tobacco can increase the risk of heart disease, stroke and high blood pressure. Long-term effects include white patches forming on gums and cheeks, tooth abrasion, tooth and gum disease, bone loss in the jaw, yellow teeth and chronic bad breath.
- 6** Chewing tobacco can increase heart rate, elevating the risk of a serious cardiac-related incident.
- 7** Smokeless tobacco wears down teeth, causes the gums to peel back and creates mouth sores.
- 8** Chewing tobacco can have a negative effect on blood flow, which could increase heart attack and stroke risk.
- 9** Using chewing tobacco can make it harder to breathe and move around.
- 10** Chewing tobacco can lead to unhealthy eating because it affects the senses of taste and smell. Users tend to eat more salty and sweet foods, which can be harmful if eaten in excess.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Medicines To Help You Quit

When you are ready to stop using tobacco products, talk to your health care provider about the over-the-counter and prescription medications available to help you quit. He or she can recommend a medication strategy that meets your needs and goals safely.

Here's a brief overview of the common tobacco cessation medications, as well as the potential side effects.

Nicotine Replacement Methods

With all nicotine replacement tools, you must stop using tobacco immediately. The nicotine in the medicine replaces the nicotine from smoking and diminishes your urge for it gradually. Nicotine replacement tools include:

Patch The nicotine patch is placed on the skin and releases nicotine into the bloodstream. Patches are available over-the-counter in different strengths. Each patch is worn typically for 16 to 24 hours a day. Over the course of six weeks, the nicotine dose in the patch is decreased gradually until the patient is nicotine-free.

Possible side effects: skin irritation, sweating, diarrhea and insomnia

Gum Nicotine gum can be bought over-the-counter. It releases nicotine that is absorbed into the blood through the mouth and gums. The gum is chewed briefly and then rests in the mouth. Possible side effects: heartburn, hiccups, headache, nausea and dizziness

Nasal Spray Nasal spray delivers small doses of nicotine into the nasal passages, reducing the urge for nicotine. This form of therapy is available only through a health care provider. Possible side effects: nasal irritation, throat irritation, watery eyes, sneezing and coughing



Prescription Medications

Sustained Release Tablets Bupropion Hcl (*also known as Zyban*) and Varenline (known under the name Chantix) are prescription medicines available from your health care provider. It can help reduce withdrawal symptoms and the urge to use tobacco without the use of nicotine. Unlike nicotine replacement methods, you can use Zyban to get ready to quit while you are still using tobacco. Most people take the medication for seven to 12 weeks.

Possible side effects: dry mouth, difficulty sleeping and risk of seizure

Counseling

Regardless of the tobacco cessation you choose, it helps to get counseling and use other behavior modification techniques while you are trying to quit. The medicines only can help you overcome the physical symptoms of nicotine withdrawal, not the psychological addiction.

The licensed counselors at Blount Memorial Counseling and CONCERN are expert listeners who can guide you toward healthy, positive choices. Counselors are available Monday through Friday with evening hours two nights each week. Clients can self-pay or use insurance.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call Blount Memorial Counseling at 865-984-4223 (for appointments in Maryville) or 423-884-1945 (for appointments in Vonore).

Smoking Cessation Classes Work

If you want to stop smoking, participating in a smoking cessation class offers the support and strategies needed for lifelong success. According to the American Heart Association, 20 to 40 percent of participants in smoking cessation programs are able to quit smoking and stay off cigarettes for at least one year. Smoking cessation programs seem especially helpful for people who smoke more than 25 cigarettes a day.

The American Lung Association (ALA) Freedom From Smoking® course is a proven program offered throughout the year at local hospitals, churches, community centers and workplaces. The class meets once a week for eight consecutive weeks and features a step-by-step plan for quitting smoking. Weekly sessions are designed to help smokers gain control over their behavior, and include individual and group activities. [For more information](#), visit www.lungusa.org or call the ALA Helpline at **1-800-548-8252**.

If your schedule makes it difficult to attend a group class, there's a Freedom From Smoking® (FFS) group course for the Internet. FFS Online can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. [For more information or to register](#), visit www.fsonline.org.

REBOUNDED FROM RELAPSES

If you slip and start smoking again, don't give up. Research shows that 84 percent of ex-smokers slipped up during their quitting process, yet still went on to quit for good. Relapse doesn't have to mean failure. Instead, learn from your relapse. Figure out what caused it, and use this understanding to try again.

Minor relapse: *What to do if you smoke one or two cigarettes*

If have one or two cigarettes after you quit, use the slip-up to learn more about the danger points in your quitting program. Write down when you slipped and what you were doing when it happened. Why do you think you smoked? Was it the people who were with you, your mood or the time of day? Maybe your relapse was related to a rough day at work or extra stress in your life.

Decide what you're going to do differently the next time you get into a similar situation. Create a plan, and then write it down on a small piece of paper you can tuck into your wallet, briefcase or purse. When you get the urge to smoke in the future, re-read the plan to help stay on track.

Major relapse: *If it's more than just a slip*

If you are smoking steadily again, consider some common pitfalls and how you can overcome them. Start by asking yourself these four questions:

Do I really want to quit?

If you're in a tobacco-cessation program, chances are you listed the reasons why you wanted to quit. Go back and check your list. Did you really mean it? Make sure that you know why you want to quit and are committed to achieve your goal.

Do I need more help?

If you're trying to do it alone, you may benefit from enlisting a helper. Successful quitters often have a support person who has agreed to be there when they need understanding, advice and a sympathetic ear. If you do have a helper, is he or she giving you as much support as you need? Communicate your expectations and needs clearly, then confirm that your helper is willing and able to take on the challenge. Remember to ask for help when you need it. Having a supportive helper is worthless if you don't let him or her help.

Am I under too much stress?

Is something unusually stressful going on in your life right now? If the answer is yes, then perhaps you should set a new quit date when the stressful period is over. If ordinary day-to-day stress is making it difficult to quit, get help learning to cope with stress from your health care provider, a counselor or your tobacco-cessation program. Exercise, deep breathing, meditation, yoga, Pilates, mindfulness-based stress reduction and relaxation exercises all can help with stress.

Am I discouraged by those extra pounds?

Weight gain is a common reason for going back to smoking. But consider this: Most people gain less than 10 pounds when they quit. Making an exercise program part of your quit plan will take care of those extra pounds. And remember, the negative health effects of smoking are the same as carrying around an extra 60 to 80 pounds.

Getting Back on Track

Everyone makes mistakes. Quitting tobacco is one of the hardest things you will ever do in your life, so don't beat yourself up if you have a relapse. After a slip, avoid focusing on your failure. Instead, concentrate on getting back on track with your tobacco-cessation program. Set a new quit date and let your friends and family know the good news: You're not giving up.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

Tennessee Tobacco Quitline

1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)

This free program is available to all Tennessee residents. Participants receive a Tobacco Quit Kit and the support of a quit coach to learn to deal with tobacco cravings and other challenges.

American Lung Association Lung Helpline

1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872)

Freedom From Smoking® Group Clinic

1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872)

Blount County Substance Abuse Prevention Action Team

865-977-5727 and www.blounthealth.org.

WEBSITES TO EXPLORE

American Lung Association's "Tools To Quit"

www.quitterinyou.org/tools

American Cancer Society

www.cancer.org

Freedom From Smoking®

www.ffsonline.org

National Cancer Institute's Smokefree.Gov

www.smokefree.gov

The Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Within 20 minutes:

- Blood pressure drops to normal
- Pulse slows to normal
- Temperature of hands and feet returns to normal

Within 8 hours:

- Carbon monoxide level in blood decreases
- Oxygen level in blood increase to normal

Within 24 hours:

- Chance of heart attack decreases

Within 48 hours:

- Damaged nerve endings start to re-grow
- Sense of smell and taste begin to improve

Within 72 hours:

- Nicotine is completely out of the body
- Bronchial tubes relax, making breathing easier

Within a year...

2 weeks to 3 months:

- Blood circulation improves throughout the body
- Exercise becomes easier
- Lung function increases by 30 percent

1 to 9 months:

- Coughing, shortness of breath and sinus congestion decrease
- Cilia re-grow in lungs, increasing the lungs ability to clean themselves and reduce frequency of infections
- Your body's overall energy level increases

1 year:

- Risk of heart disease is reduced by half

For the rest of your life...

5 years:

- Risk of stroke decreases to the level of non-smokers

10 years:

- Risk of lung cancer is reduced by half
- Precancerous cells in the body are replaced by healthy cells
- Incidence of other cancers (mouth, larynx, esophagus, bladder, kidney and pancreas) decrease

15 years:

- Overall risk of death nearly returns to the level of someone who never smoked
- Risks of heart disease and lung cancer return to levels of a non-smoker



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