



# 31st May 2020 World No Tobacco Day

## Background

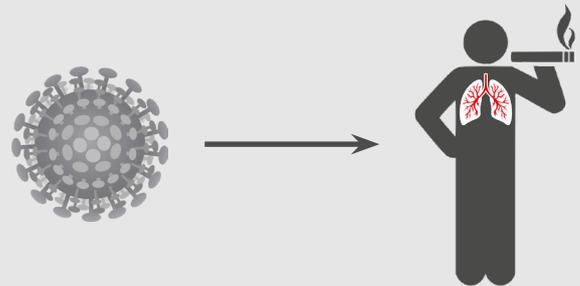
Tobacco smoking increases the risk to many respiratory infections and aggravates the severity of existing respiratory diseases. Research suggests that smokers are more susceptible to develop severe disease with COVID-19 compared to non-smokers (WHO, 2020).

**8 Million**  
Deaths  
caused by  
tobacco  
every  
year



**1 Million**  
Deaths  
due to  
second  
hand  
exposure

## COVID-19 and Tobacco



The COVID-19 virus primarily attacks the lungs. As smoking impairs lung function, this increases the effort for the body to fight off viruses and other diseases.

## Cessation



Period of lock-down could be used by some as an opportunity to stop smoking. Proven methods to promote cessation include:

- Behavioural- Advice and support, toll-free quit lines, mobile text-messaging programmes
- Pharmacotherapy - nicotine replacement therapies

## Health Benefits



Within **20 minutes** of quitting, elevated heart rate and blood pressure drop



After **12 hours**, the carbon monoxide level in the bloodstream drops to normal



Within **2-12 weeks**, circulation improves and lung function increases



After **1-9 months**, coughing and shortness of breath decrease