

HEALTH MATTERS **FREE** Ezempilo

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KZN HEALTH LEADS THE WAY IN:
saving mothers, babies



health

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Health
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**SPECIAL FOCUS ON
MATERNAL
HEALTH**

NO WOMAN SHOULD DIE WHILE GIVING BIRTH

Let's make a difference to their future.

More than 1500 women die around the world every day due to pregnancy related complications. This can be avoided. KZN Health is appealing to pregnant women to report to their nearest clinic for ante natal care within three months of falling pregnant. This can save the health of you and your baby. It means being able to pick up on any health problems and monitoring your health throughout your pregnancy, to prevent complications which can lead to death. The campaign to save our province's mothers and children needs all our support and responsible actions. It means encouraging friends and family who are pregnant to go for regular checks ups. It means taking responsibility as a pregnant woman to make the effort and keep to your booking. It's the only way we can reduce the deaths. We owe it to the children.



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Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

Message from



KZN MEC for Health,
Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo

Commemorating Nurses Day

Greetings to all the Pediatric Nurses; Psychiatric Nurses; Midwives; Theatre Nurses; Orthopedic Nurses; Ophthalmic Nurses; Primary Health Care Nurses; nursing tutors; Nursing managers; chief operational nurses; staff nurses and nurses in all categories not mentioned here.

According to the 2010 country Report on MDGs, the baseline Maternal Mortality Ratio for South Africa is 150 per 100 000 live births and still miles away from attaining the MDG 5 target which calls on the country to reduce the Maternal Mortality Ratio to 38 per 100 000 live births by 2015.

This we have to mention because the nursing fraternity has a pivotal role in ensuring that the maternal mortality ratio in our Province is reduced. We cannot over emphasise the fact that much pain and suffering is caused when mothers die in childbirth. We all know that the consequences of maternal mortality have dire consequences on children's lives, the family, the community and the economic status of the country. As we celebrate Nurses Day we need to be mindful of the fact that our Province is in the spotlight when considering that the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) was launched in one of our institutions, Osindisweni Hospital. This is an African Union initiative driven by the slogan that says: "Africa Cares: No Woman Should Die While Giving Life!"

As part and parcel of the community, we should be instrumental in advising and encouraging pregnant women to attend antenatal clinics regularly as a way of saving lives.

It should be us ensuring that everyone - especially pregnant women get tested for HIV and making sure that those that test positive take and adhere to Anti-Retroviral Treatment in order to stay healthy and to prevent infecting the child with HIV. It is also incumbent on all of us to make it a point that new born babies are immunized before leaving the health care facilities and that HIV positive children receive and adhere to ARV treatment.

Let us commit to be a champion of change in health care.

Let the Nursing pledge be our guide always:

The total health of our patients will be our first consideration.



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Your suggestions and comments are welcome, and if you have been impressed by a health worker who provided an outstanding service, let us know and we will feature them! Contact us on 031 562 9803, editor@ezempilohealthmatters.co.za or write to us on PO Box 25439, Gateway 4321.

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DON'T WALK ALONE



Woman & MENOPAUSE

what's the big deal?

From the age of 40 onwards, a woman's body naturally starts preparing for old age, when she will no longer produce and bear children. A woman is considered to be in menopause when she has not had her period for 12 months in a row, there is no unnatural cause (like illness) and she becomes infertile (unable to have children).

During menopause a woman's body stops producing oestrogen. Without oestrogen your risk of getting heart disease, brittle bones (osteoporosis) and forgetfulness increases, which is why it's important for women over 40 to go for regular check ups – especially if you have not had a period for more than five months and suddenly start bleeding again or experience severe mood swings or experience other symptoms of menopause.

Can this be treated naturally?

YES! Your first step to managing the symptoms of menopause and to leading a healthy life is daily exercise, quit smoking, control your weight and manage stress. Regular exercise keeps your weight down, improves sleep, strengthens your bones and lifts your moods. Drink plenty of water to keep the hot flushes under control.

Vaginal dryness as a result of menopause can lead to a lessened interest in sex. Ask your clinic for a water-based cream that you can apply such as K-Y Jelly, don't use petroleum based products as it may cause infections.

OTHER SYMPTOMS OF MENOPAUSE

- ➔ Joint pains, aching wrists and ankles.
- ➔ Vaginal dryness, dry skin.
- ➔ Hot flushes, feeling like you have a fever.
- ➔ Night sweats, hot flushes at night.
- ➔ Mood swings, feeling tearful the one moment and happy the next.
- ➔ You are less interested in sex.
- ➔ Your mind is not as active as normally, forgetfulness is quite a common symptom.

Mood changes can be difficult to manage, talk to your family so that they get a better understanding of your situation. Mood swings can easily turn into depression. If your mood swings are really bad, you need to talk to your clinic to get tablets for depression.

Treating Menopause Medically

If the symptoms are severe or you are at high risk of heart disease or any other long term illness, speak to your clinic about what options there and they will advise you – don't ignore the symptoms if they affect your daily life.

NO WOMAN SHOULD DIE WHILE GIVING BIRTH

Around 1500 women die every day around the world because of pregnancy complications or while giving birth. In KZN, 60% of all deaths from pregnancy or labour can be prevented – if pregnant women report early and go for regular checkups. Ezempilo spoke to KZN Health head, Dr Sibongile Zungu to find out more about the launch of the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality in Africa (CARMMA):



Ezempilo:
How will this campaign prevent mothers and children from dying?

Dr Zungu:
The campaign will be evidence based. In other words, we need to see the results. KZN has far too many women dying during pregnancy and labour, and we will implement a number of steps to reduce this number.



KZN Health head, Dr Sibongile Zungu working in the community to save lives

Ezempilo:
What will be done to make sure the campaign works?

- Dr Zungu:**
As KZN health, we will implement the following strategies:
- Strengthen access to more sexual health services, especially family planning
 - Expand the promotion of early antenatal care attendance and booking
 - Ensure better access to Skilled Birth Attendance by providing obstetric ambulances to every facility where deliveries are conducted
 - Establish maternity waiting homes where necessary so women have better access to

hospital in preparation for labour

- Strengthen Human Resources for Maternal and Child Health through training
- Expand our promotion of breast-feeding
- Intensify efforts to manage HIV positive mothers and children through improved access to treatment and management of co-infections
- Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV

Ezempilo:
How will this help women living in rural areas?

Dr Zungu:
The campaign is aimed especially at those

women who have suffered the most due to lack of access to health care. At least 54% of KZN's population are living in rural areas and getting health service to them has historically been a challenge. For this reason mobile clinics have played a huge role, and we will increase the use of mobile clinics so that people in these areas will have access to health care and can be transferred to hospitals when needed.

Ezempilo:
Why is it important to meet the Millennium Development Goals and what is it all about?

Dr Zungu:
The Millennium Development Goals are goals adopted by world leaders in 2000 as a way of tackling extreme poverty by 2015 and measures our progress. We want to reduce the deaths of mothers in this province by 75% by 2015. This is tough as we do not have unlimited resources or funding, but we cannot sit back and do nothing because we are faced with these obstacles. We do address the problem despite the challenges that can be demoralizing for those health workers who continue to do their best to make a difference. This campaign will increase our efforts and encourage everyone to work towards reducing maternal deaths. Already we are seeing the benefits, in 2008 the rate of transmission of HIV from mother child was 21%, today thanks to the efforts of our MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo and our health workers efforts, this figure has come down to 2.8%, so we can do it!



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Diabetes and

PREGNANCY

If gestational diabetes is not diagnosed or not monitored it can harm both the mother and baby so go for regular check ups during pregnancy

How It Affects You and the Baby

THE food we eat and the unhealthy lifestyles we lead means more women are becoming diabetic. If you are diabetic and want to have a child, there are a few things you should consider before getting pregnant.

Planning your pregnancy should be the first step. Start by stabilising your sugar levels for eight to 12 weeks before trying to fall pregnant. This is because high blood sugar can cause problems at birth and birth defects in early pregnancy.

How diabetes may affect you and baby

If you're diabetic, chances are you would give birth to a large baby – that's because baby gets too much sugar from you while in the womb. This can lead to the following risks:

- A more difficult labour and bigger chance of having a still birth.
- These babies normally have larger organs like liver and heart and have problems with their lungs.



Gestational diabetes

Even if you are not diabetic, some women get a type of diabetes called Gestational diabetes, only when they are pregnant. This means you are only diabetic when you are pregnant and it will go away after the baby's birth. This kind of diabetes normally starts when you are 13 to 28 weeks pregnant.

SYMPTOMS

Some women might not show any symptoms but still have gestational diabetes.

However, symptoms can include:

- Blurred vision
- Unusual thirst
- Excessive hunger
- Excessive urination
- Thrush infections
- High blood pressure
- Tiredness
- Risks and complications

These problems can be avoided by giving special attention to both the health of you and baby during your pregnancy.

Taking Medicine for Diabetes?

If you are on diabetic medication, let your clinic know as soon as you are pregnant as they may need to change your medication so that it's safe for you and baby.

After birth

After birth there are some things you can do to control your diabetes. Breastfeeding will help you and your baby to stay healthy.

KZN HEALTH



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NEWS

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

Strini Naidoo, first male nurse to receive the KZN Florence Nightingale Nursing Award!

The public sector is often singled out one that is overwhelmed with pressure. So it takes quite an extraordinary person to be recognised each year for the Florence Nightingale award which is given to nurses in this sector who have gone beyond the call of duty. Thirty nine year old Strini Mark Naidoo, the Operational Unit Manager in the surgical ward at Addington has scooped this award this month. Speaking to Ezempilo, Naidoo says his love for caring for others, which is central to being a nurse, was shaped at an early age in the dusty outskirts of the Chatsworth community where he was born. The youngest of eight children, Naidoo's mother was left to raise all the children after Naidoo's father passed way. Despite the difficult upbringing, Naidoo knew he wanted to grow up helping others. "As a boy I helped to feed and bath the elderly people for free in our community and that influenced my decision to get into nursing. I'm a natural born carer. I am always early for work by 6am and check on all patients. I name them by names and I try to develop a mutual relationship. I am there for the doctor's visits in the ward and also offer my professional input. I always try to be a role model to other staff members," he says.

How it all started

In 1993 Naidoo enrolled at R K Khan Hospital for a general nursing diploma. In 1996, he worked in various departments within the same institution and four years

later left to work in the United Kingdom where he trained further and even worked at King's College Hospital – the very hospital where Florence Nightingale once worked!

Armed with the additional experience and skills, he returned to South Africa in 2005 and was soon appointed at Addington Hospital. Today, Strini and his wife are active volunteers for the sick and needy, inspiring others to do the same!

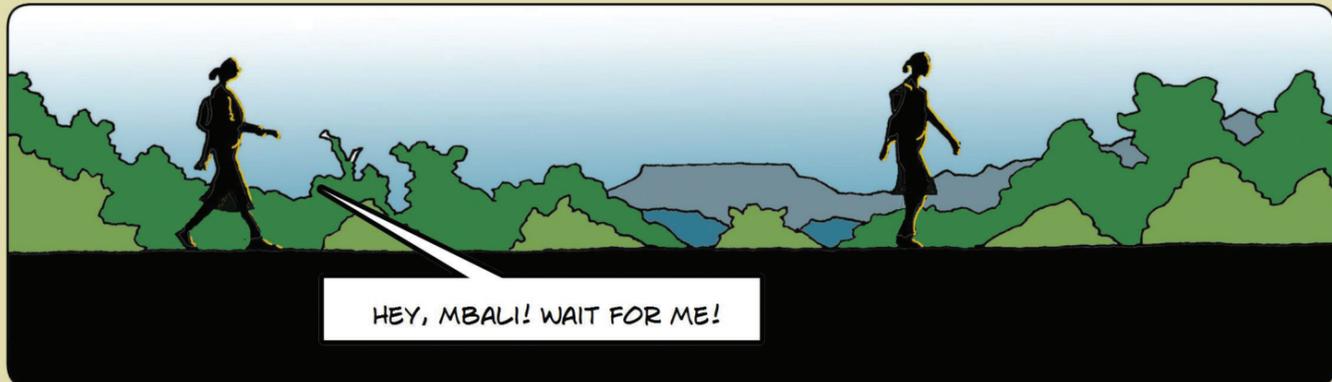
Thank you Strini for making a difference to the lives of others and well done!



From the desk of Deputy Manager, Media Liaison, Chris Maxon



PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE



teenage PREGNANCY

"Being a mother when you're still a teenage yourself is tough and can be one of the loneliest feelings you will experience. How are you supposed to know what your baby wants and needs, if you are still growing and don't even have the money to take care of your child?"

These are the words of Ntokozo, a 17 year old who fell pregnant. She wants other young girls her age to avoid making the same mistake. This is her story...

"I had very strict parents and so rebelled. I just wanted to enjoy life with my friends and had a boyfriend because that made a girl look cool. I often lied to my parents and would go to parties at night or out with my boyfriend. It was like a crime to me, lying to my parents. I knew it was not right, but I did it anyway. I fell pregnant on the first night I slept with my boyfriend and was shocked. I waited until I was seven months because I was so scared to tell my parents. I asked my mom's friend to talk to my mom and while she was doing it, I packed my bags. I could not face them, so I just ran away. I went to my gogo's house. My mother was shocked by my pregnancy but tried to be supportive. Then my boyfriend decided to tell his dad. He asked his father to go to my home and say it happened. It was hectic, because my parents did not even know him or see him before that. My father told him he will have to take responsibility.

My boyfriend and I moved in together at my parents' house. We stayed together for a year, but he always got involved with other women, it was a mess and I was left alone with the baby. He went back to school and continued his life. For one year and three months I could not go back to school because I was breastfeeding. When my baby cried, I also cried because I did not know how to deal with the situation. I went back to school the next year, but it was really hard. My friends were still having fun but I had to rush back home, do my homework and take care of my little girl. I want other teenage girls to know that having sex will not give you freedom, it will give you pain and responsibility. Don't throw your life away, because your friends will drop you when you are pregnant. I love my little girl and she gives me a lot of love, but I just wish I waited..."

NOT
A QUICK FIX
TO A BETTER
LIFE



MEC for Health Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo with the Premier of Kwazulu-Natal Dr Zweli Mkhize speaking to a teenage mother

Wise words from a young girl. If that's not enough to convince you to wait, think about the following:

FAST FACTS:

Most pregnant teenagers live with trauma, fear and shame. Teenage pregnancy is still stigmatised, it leads to depression, social exclusion, low self-esteem and poor academic performance.

Teenage pregnancy increases domestic violence because the girls are dependent on the boys for money and support. They are more likely to become single parents.

Most pregnant girls choose not to go back to school, this means they don't get a proper education and as a result can't find a decent paying job. If they do return to school, they have lower grades and poor school attendance.

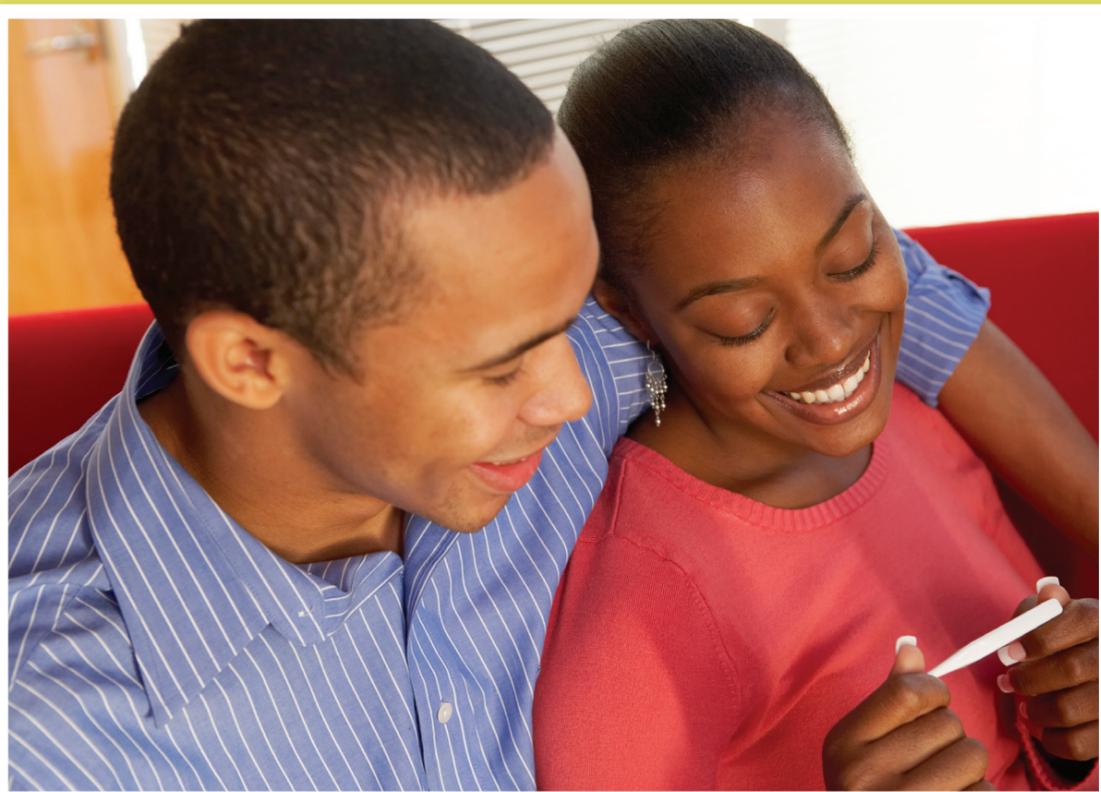
FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT THE KZN HELPLINE ON 0800 00 51 33

**BE A
KID**
DON'T HAVE ONE!

FAMILY PLANNING SAVES LIVES AND IMPROVES HEALTH

KZN Health's Valerie Makatini is the Deputy Manager of Sexual Reproductive Health, Family Planning. She will be running a series on family planning in each issue of Ezempilo, so be sure to collect them all and pass on the knowledge it's all about each one, teaching one after all!

- All you need to know but may be too embarrassed to ask!



Why should women choose contraceptives/pill?

Simply put, by using contraceptives a woman reduces her chance of maternal death, and improves her health by preventing unwanted and high-risk pregnancies and the need for unsafe abortions. Some contraceptives also improve women's health by reducing the likelihood of disease transmission and protecting against certain cancers and health problems.

Why use family planning/contraceptives?

As a woman, the decision to plan for a family empowers you with the choice. You have the right to choose when and how many children to have. It also means you are better prepared for the pregnancy and will be able to plan ahead. By planning for the future it also allows you as a family to decide how money will be spent, and fewer children means more time and money for each one. For young girls, delaying

pregnancy means they can stay in school without the embarrassment of having to leave due to falling pregnant – and missing out on education. Postponing the first pregnancy until the mother is at least 18 years of age is an important factor in reducing child deaths. A baby born to a teenage mother is more likely to be born too early and weigh too little at birth and is 24 percent more likely to die in the first month of life, than a baby born to a mother aged 25-34 years.

When is pregnancy a risk?

Pregnancy is particularly risky to certain groups of women:

- Very young, teenage girls who become pregnant face serious health risks because their bodies may not be physically mature to handle the stress of pregnancy and childbirth. Girls aged 15-19 have up to three times maternal death rate as women aged 20-24.
- The risk of child bearing is also greater in older women as their bodies are less able to deal with the physical stresses of pregnancy and childbirth. Women over the age of 35 are five times more likely to die in pregnancy or childbirth than women aged 20- 24. The risk of giving birth to babies with low birth weight or disabilities also increase in older women.
- The risk of maternal death increases after each successive birth after the fourth child.
- Women who have health problems face an increased risk of death if they become pregnant. For example, the risk of dying from low blood (anaemia), heart disease, and kidney disease, increases in women who are pregnant compared to those who are not.



HEALTHY MOTHERS HAVE HEALTHY BABIES, LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE IT HAPPEN!

MAY

AWARENESS

Anti-Tobacco Campaign Month

Smoking and lung cancer go together. The aim of the month-long campaign is to focus on how to give up smoking. Think of the money you'll save! It's time to make a change, and put your money to better use – give up smoking, even if it means taking it one day at a time, you **can** do it!

Hospice Week: 6-13

The theme "Celebrating Partnerships" this year will acknowledge the organisations that work together to reach more people who need palliative care which improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing problems with life-threatening illness.



World Red Cross Day: 8

The aim of this day is to say thank you to those who risk their own lives to save others around the world. The organisation Red Cross is often called in to help in times of wars and natural disasters.

World Move for Health Day: 10

Our health MEC Dr Dhlomo is a keen runner and keeps in shape daily. He leads by example. This day is to encourage us to live a healthier lifestyle, no matter where we live, how we live, or how much we earn. We all need to get out and walk, run, and get fit. A healthy body helps keep a healthy mind!

International Multiple Sclerosis Month

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a disease affecting the brain and spine. That does not mean a person cannot be successful. The cause of MS is still unknown, but a person can still live a fulfilling life.

Contact the MSSA National Helpline on 0860 45 6772 to find out more about the disease.

World Chronic Fatigue and Immune Dysfunction Syndrome: 12

This day is used to make people aware of this syndrome. It's more than just feeling very tired. It's a serious condition that leads to pain in the muscles and bones, headaches and exhaustion. **BUT IT CAN BE TREATED!** Consult your health worker if you have any of these signs.

International Nurses Day:

Closing the Gap: From Evidence to Action

International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world on this day and it's an opportunity to celebrate the contribution nurses make, improving the lives of individuals and their families, the health and wellbeing of whole communities and the wider population. It's also an opportunity to:

- Enhance the image of nursing and nurses locally and nationally
- Represent the diversity of nursing roles and their contribution to health and wellbeing
- Promote nursing as an attractive, rewarding and modern career
- Set right any misconceptions about nurses and the nursing profession
- Visit schools and offer careers insights, showing how worthwhile and fulfilling a nursing career can be.



Candlelight Memorial Day: 20

The theme this year is Promoting Health and Dignity Together. It aims to raise awareness around HIV and to promote respect for human rights of people living with HIV.

HIV

Child Protection Week: 21-27

Government introduced Child Protection Week as a way of putting children first. Part of this is to make sure services exist that can help children who become victims of abuse to report this. If you suspect that a child is being abused **SPEAK** out and encourage children to speak out without fear.

International Day of Action for Women's Health: 28

We often say that when you teach a woman, you teach a nation. That's because women are at the heart of the home. Despite this, women continue to face daily abuse at the hands of their partners, husbands often leading to death. Often women put their health last in the family, because they are too busy taking care of everyone else. It's time to put women first. KZN Health has placed women and children at the forefront of health care. Let's encourage every man to do the same at home.



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MAY IS
ANTI-TOBACCO
CAMPAIGN MONTH

SMOKING KILLS

It's never too late. If you're smoking, give it up before your body gives up on you!

IT'S **NEVER**
TOO LATE TO
QUIT!

For Jacob puffing a cigarette stolen from his father's pockets on his way to school was normal. He watched his father enjoying his smokes, then his elder brother. Then he was also hooked. Today at 40 years, he looks sixty and can hardly breathe. He admits that it is an expensive habit especially as he is unemployed. As he recounts his life he rolls some tobacco in an old newspaper. His voice is gruff and he coughs all the time. His teeth and skin colour are yellowish grey as he looks down and admits he regrets not giving up smoking earlier.

Why Quit Now?

80% of lung cancer deaths in South Africa are a result of smoking. That's enough to encourage you to quit now if you are a smoker. It takes courage and determination to give up smoking, but the choice is between life and death. Smoking kills, that's the bottom line. You may experience withdrawal symptoms, and some shakiness when you first give up smoking, but don't give in, this will only last a few days and is also a sign that your body is healing itself! We all know the effects of giving up smoking in the long term, but did you know that your body starts to benefit even immediately?

Within hours:

Your circulation will improve in your hands and feet, making them feel warmer

Your body's will begin to fight colds and coughs more easily

You'll be able to taste your food better as the smell and taste of tobacco will no longer be there

You will start to enjoy eating healthy snacks so eat fruit when you crave a cigarette or want to reach for your snuff!

The risk of heart attack or stroke starts decreasing

Within months:

You will be able to walk easier, no more finding it difficult to breathe!

You'll SAVE money and will be surprised at how much you wasted on cigarettes and snuff in the past!

Long term:

Your risk of getting lung cancer is reduced by half within five years

Your heart becomes healthier, leading to less chance of a heart attack

You will feel better, look better and have a healthier body!

**BE COOL,
DON'T BE A SMOKING
FOOL**