

### Alcohol Awareness

## The Effects of Mixing Alcohol and Tobacco

Both tobacco and alcohol can be highly addictive and have long-ranging health consequences. The effects of mixing tobacco and alcohol can include a shortened life span and respiratory problems. This is because both substances can be dangerous on their own and because tobacco is a mild stimulant, while alcohol is a depressant. Also, both tobacco and alcohol are legal and widely available, making them easier to abuse.

### What Does Tobacco Do to the Body?

Tobacco is a plant-based drug that contains nicotine, which is the addictive substance in cigarettes. When you smoke a cigarette, the nicotine constricts the blood vessels in your body, causing your blood pressure to become higher. High blood pressure is included with health problems such as strokes. Nicotine also increases your heart rate and stimulates the nervous system.



### What Does Alcohol Do to the Body?

Alcohol is a depressant, meaning it slows the functioning of the mind and the body. This is because it decreases the activity between the brain's neurons, which control all of the body's functions. Accidents and falls are more likely to happen after the consumption of too much alcohol.

### Short-Term Effects of Smoking and Drinking

The short-term effects of mixing alcohol and tobacco are subtle. The primary danger from drinking and smoking simultaneously is that, because one drug is a depressant and the other one is a stimulant, you may not realize how much the alcohol is affecting your body. This could cause you to drink more than you should because you do not feel drunk. Incorrectly assessing your level of inebriation could lead to poor judgment.

### Long-Term Effects of Smoking and Drinking

The long-term effects of mixing alcohol and tobacco are still being studied, but initial tests show that mixing the two drugs can have long-ranging and serious health consequences. Studies have shown that smoking and drinking together can increase the risk of throat and esophageal cancer. This may be because the alcohol dissolves chemicals in the cigarette while they are still in the throat. This can cause carcinogens to become trapped against the sensitive tissues of the throat. Furthermore, drinking alcohol and smoking at the same time affects how quickly the body can metabolize both drugs. This means that the carcinogens from cigarettes stay in the bloodstream for longer. Longer exposure to carcinogens means an increased cancer risk.

The Effects of Mixing Alcohol and Tobacco. Retrieved from <https://www.alcohol.org/mixing-with-tobacco/#short-term-effects-of-smoking-and-drinking>



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See calendar on other side to see what is going on this week

## Substance Use Disorders and Tobacco Use

### How are substance use disorders (SUD) and smoking related?

An adult with a substance use disorder (SUD) is 3-4 times more likely to smoke than someone who doesn't have an SUD. In fact, 50% of deaths among people with an alcohol use disorder who smoke are due to tobacco-related diseases.

### What kinds of health problems can occur when I have a SUD and I smoke?

- You have a much greater chance of getting cancer of the mouth, throat, and esophagus when you smoke and drink alcohol
- Cravings for nicotine can increase your cravings for drugs, thereby jeopardizing your recovery
- Like anyone who smokes, you are at greater risk for serious health conditions like certain types of cancer, COPD, heart disease, and breathing issues

### Can I quit smoking while I am getting SUD treatment and how will it improve my health?

Yes! Many people in SUD treatment want to quit smoking and have a good chance at doing so, especially with support like counseling and medication.

The health benefits of quitting smoking include:

- Reducing your risk of cancer (especially mouth, throat, and esophagus) if you have an alcohol use disorder
- Improving your chance of not relapsing to alcohol or drugs
- Lowering your risk of lung disease, heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, and other tobacco-related conditions

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS & TOBACCO USE.  
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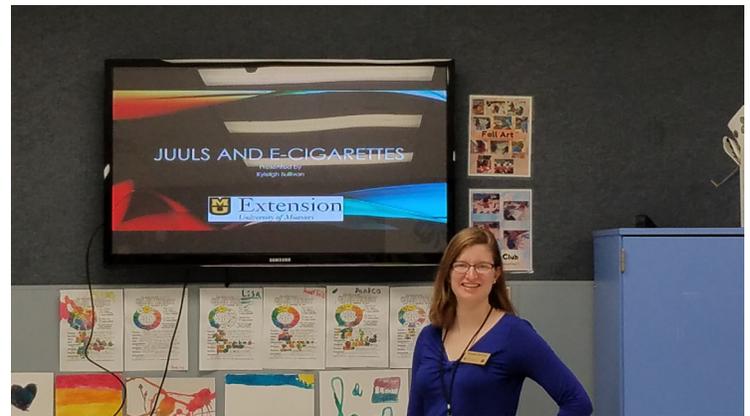
## HeRO Spotlight: Whiteman Air Force Base Vaping Prevention



Whiteman Health Promotion partnered with Missouri University-Extension on a HeRO Vaping Prevention initiative titled “Catch My Breath.” Ms. Kyleigh Sullivan (Missouri University-Extension) spoke to 26 kids ages 10 and up about nicotine’s effects (how it will affect their future to perform), types of e-cigarettes, why cigarettes are so popular, and peer pressure (what to do about it).

The kids in attendance asked many questions, and at the end of the presentation, each child was asked to state one item they learned from the class. Each and every one could name a fact that they learned. They were very engaged.

They also had great feedback from the adults who attended stating that they learned a lot as well.



Got questions on other health issues related to sleep health, physical activity, tobacco, or nutrition? Share them with us and we will help you “Bust The Myths!” Send your questions to [usaf.jbsa.afmsa.mbx.hpo@mail.mil](mailto:usaf.jbsa.afmsa.mbx.hpo@mail.mil). Make sure to include in the subject line “Health Myth Buster.” For more online health tips visit the Air Force Health Promotion webpage <https://www.airforcemedicine.af.mil/Resources/Health-Promotion/>



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### Community Events

HERE'S WHAT'S GOING ON WHERE YOU LIVE

Your Local Health Promotion Office



Contact:

Phone:

Email:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday