

Surgeon General Adds New Risks To Long List Of Smoking's Harms

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NPR:

Acting Surgeon General Boris Lushniak is the latest in a long line of surgeons general who have tried to pound the final nails into the coffin of America's smoking habit.

"Enough is enough," Lushniak says. But there's no reason to think his new report on smoking and health — the 32nd in a series that stretches back 50 years — will do the trick.

Smoking's persistence isn't for lack of evidence about the harms it causes. The latest report, which tops 900 pages, contains an impressive list of disorders newly deemed to be caused by smoking. They include diabetes, facial deformities in babies born to smoking mothers, liver and colorectal cancer, age-related macular degeneration, ectopic pregnancy, rheumatoid arthritis and erectile dysfunction, to name a few.

The newly recognized harms aren't limited to smokers. Secondhand smoke raises the risk of stroke by up to 30 percent.

"Smoking really is even worse than we knew," Dr. Thomas Friedman, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, tells Shots. Half of all long-term smokers will die from a smoking-related disease, with the annual toll now about 480,000 people.

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But there's one new wrinkle. Behavioral psychologist David Abrams says this report makes a significant distinction between the harmfulness of burning tobacco and less harmful ways of delivering the nicotine that keeps people addicted.

The report concludes that "cigarettes and other combusted tobacco products" should be eliminated.

Read the whole story: [NPR](#)