Smoking is immediately reduced and can be
virtually eliminated over time after quitting, even for
long-term smokers. It is never too late to quit! Advanced
tobacco control policies can help increase quit rates, a
prerequisite for achieving significant reductions in smoking-
related deaths during the first half of the 21st century.

Many people kick the habit easily while others struggle
through a difficult cycle of addiction. Quitting is possible
and is increasingly becoming the norm. Many countries now
have more ex-smokers than current smokers.

More ex-smokers quit successfully on their own (“cold
declaration”) than with nicotine replacement,
such as bupropion and varenicline, are available in
many countries.

Communication technologies—such as telephone quitlines,
text messaging, interactive telephony, and online counseling—offer important support. Psychological and behavioral
therapies, including behavior modification, hypnosis, meditation, and acupuncture, also have been employed.

Cessation programs change individual lives, reshape social
norms and community values, and foster a world where children are less likely to casually experiment with cigarettes and
smoking begins to reverse. By one year, the risk of coronary
heart disease is decreased to half that of a smoker. After five
years, the risk of a stroke is reduced virtually to that
of people who have never smoked. Cancer risk also reduces
significantly over the decade after quitting.

In the United Kingdom, quitting smoking is easier
and safer than ever before: The success rate of people using
bupropion or varenicline to stop smoking is three to four times
higher than with nicotine replacement therapy.