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Smoking a major risk factor in heart disease



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AHMEDABAD: Gerard Bodwekar had got a heart attack when he was only 36. The main cause for cardiac arrest was smoking. Gerard had started smoking when he was in class X. Today, he carries four stents in his heart as most of his arteries were blocked. âl started smoking when I was in class X. What started with one cigarette amongst five friends soon graduated to five cigarettes daily. By the time I started my business, I was smoking 12 cigarettes daily. It had become an addiction. If I was waiting for somebody, I needed a cigarette in my hand,â says Gerard. On World No Tobacco Day, Gerard says that he left smoking in 2009 after he got a heart attack. âl always though that smoking caused cancer. I never associated smoking with heart disease,â says Gerard who confesses that he left smoking after suffering a shocker of a heart attack. âlt was not easy but the heart attack taught me a couple of lessons in discipline. I can now jog for an hour without losing a breath,â says Gerard. He says that it is easy to give in to peer pressure and take to smoking but one has to battle the side-effects alone. Chief of cardiology at Apollo Hospital, Dr Sameer Dani, said that smoking is one of the key risk factors in heart disease. âA study we had conducted revealed that smoking was the prime cause in 40% of men under 45 years of age who suffered a heart attack.â

Cardiologiet at Life Care Hospital Dr. lay Shah, said that nicotine weakens the arteries of the heart causing inflammation

which leads to rupturing of the plaque inside the vessels. âSmoking is a major risk factor in heart disease and even one cigarette is dangerous to a person who is pre-disposed to heart disease, â said Dr Shah.

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