**Smoking**

**Three out of five people who still smoke cigarettes were addicted by age 16, according to the medicos. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**About the only beneficial thing in smoking is that it repels gnats and mosquitoes. Which only proves you don't have to be big to be smart. *(Paul Sweeney, in The Quarterly)***

**The unhappy birthday of the cigarette: This month marks "the 100th anniversary of the modern cigarette," said Robert N. Proctor, "but don't expect much in the way of fanfare." It was in October 1913 that Camel cigarettes debuted in the U.S., introducing a new tobacco blend that "was both mild enough to be inhaled and sweet from sugars added to the mix." Sold in cleverly packaged boxes of 20, Camels proved to be wildly popular, with 425 million cigarettes sold in 1914, and 6.5 billion two years later. At its peak, in 1952, Camel sold a staggering 105 billion cigarettes. Today, we know that smoking causes cancer, heart disease, emphysema, and other fatal illnesses; the 4 trillion Camels sold over the last century have killed about 4 million people. That's why decades of steady decline have cut cigarette sales -- including Camel's -- by half. Nonetheless, R. J. Reynolds and its parent company, Altria, are celebrating Camel's birthday with an ad campaign in Mexico and Europe, where sales remain robust. But here, any self-congratulation would seem in poor taste. That's because "Camel's success has been literally breathtaking, caravanning millions into that sleep from which we never awake." *(The Week magazine, November 1, 2013)***

**Smoking damages the brain: For smokers holding for one more reason to quit, here's a good one: A new study has found that smoking shrinks the brain, reports the New York Daily News. In the largest study of its kind, researchers analyzed brain scans of more than 500 smokers, nonsmokers, and former smokers, with an average age of 73. They found that smoking may cause thinning of the cortex, the outer layer of the brain essential for memory, language, and perception. This effect is cumulative -- the more people smoke, the thinner their brain's cortex. Even after smokers quit, researchers found, the cognitive decline and memory problems can persist for decades. Thinning of the cortex has also been linked to poor balance, Alzheimer's disease, and schizophrenia. Lead author Dr. Sherif Karama, from McGill University, said that although quitting cannot reverse the damage entirely, "subjects who stopped smoking seem to partially recover their cortical thickness for each year without smoking." *(The Week magazine, February 27, 2015)***

**CVS drops tobacco products: CVS is kicking the habit, said Phil Wahba and Julie Steenhuysen in Reuters.com. The drugstore chain said this week that it would quit selling tobacco products at its 7,600 stores by October, "becoming the first national drugstore chain the United States to take cigarettes off the shelf." The move is expected to cost CVS -- the country's second-largest drugstore chain -- roughly $2 billion in annual sales, but analysts say that loss will hardly figure in its projected revenue, and may even "strengthen its position as a health-care provider" through its Caremark subsidiary. *(The Week magazine, February 14, 2014)***

**On September 25, 1878, British physician Dr. Charles Drysdale warned against the use of tobacco in a letter to the Times newspaper. The message was one of the earliest notices on the dangers of smoking. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**Iron Will: Russians often possess a lively sense of humor. Last October they reported another world record for the Soviet Union. A Russian engineer, they said, had given up smoking 57 times in one year, breaking the old record of 50 held by America's Mark Twain. *(Sports Illustrated, as it appeared in the April, 1973 issue of Reader's Digest, on page 216)***

**During the Crimean War of the 1850s, British soldiers were introduced to Turkish tobacco. Suddenly, smoking became a popular English pastime, with men retreating to smoking rooms to enjoy their pipes and cigars. Men began wearing dedicated smoking jackets, made with plush materials and designed to fall to the mid-thigh. They were thought to absorb the smoke odors and protect the clothing from falling ash. Smoking jackets remained popular in England and abroad well into the 1950s. Fred Astaire was famously buried in his. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**The tobacco industry reports that it provides jobs for 2.3 million Americans -- and this does not include physicians, X-ray technicians, nurses, hospital employees, firefighters, dry cleaners, respiratory specialists, pharmacists, morticians and gravediggers. *(Quoted by Ann Landers, Creators Syndicate, as it appeared in the March, 1994 issue of Reader's Digest, on page 150)***

**Yes, it's true. The original Marlboro man died of emphysema. His name was David Millar. *(Paul Stirling Hagerman, in It's a Weird World, p. 121)***

**The doctor says to the patient: "You may smoke in here only if you're on fire." *(The Saturday Evening Post cartoon)***

**Smokers feel more pain: People who smoke or are exposed to secondhand smoke may require heavier doses of anesthesia and painkillers during surgery, Science Daily.com reports. A new study found that cigarettes -- which are filled with more than 4,000 chemicals -- can not only affect the metabolism of anesthetic drugs in the liver but may also influence nerve cells involved in the sensation of pain. Among 90 women who underwent a total abdominal hysterectomy, those who smoked needed 33 percent more anesthesia throughout their operation than did nonsmokers; meanwhile, passive smokers required 20 percent more anesthesia. Cigarette users also needed 23 percent more prescription painkillers than nonsmokers to experience the same level of effectiveness. Researchers said doctors and anesthesiologists should factor smoking into their decisions, while smokers should weigh yet another cost of their addiction. *(The Week magazine, June 19, 2015)***

**A man who recently quit smoking and drinking said, "I've never felt better or worse in my whole life." *(Earl Wilson, Publishers-Hall Syndicate)***

**Secondhand smoke still lingers: Over the past decade, thanks in part to widespread restrictions on when and where people can light up, the number of Americans who smoke has rapidly declined. But despite that reduction, some 58 million Americans are still regularly exposed to secondhand smoke, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Although this is a 50 percent drop from 10 years ago, one in four nonsmokers remains vulnerable, and the risks are most pronounced among African-American children and the poor. "We've seen a marked decline in secondhand smoke exposure," the CDC's Brian King tells The Wall Street Journal. But "the prevalence remains alarmingly high, and there's also marked disparities." Exposure among black children from ages 3 to 11 is still 68 percent -- about twice the level for white or Hispanic kids. The percentage of impoverished people exposed to secondhand smoke stands at about 43 percent, compared with roughly 21 percent for those living above the poverty line. Health officials warn that when it comes to secondhand smoke -- which is linked with several health risks, including asthma, respiratory infections, and heart and lung disease -- there is no safe level of exposure. *(The Week magazine, February20, 2015)***

**moking kills, and if you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life. *(Brooke Shields)***

**Prize-winning slogan in an anti-smoking contest: "No One Likes to Kiss an Ashtray -- Don't Smoke!" *(Angel Soto, in Reader's Digest)***

**In colonial Virginia, it was considered treason to conspire to damage or destroy a tobacco plant. The law carried with it the death penalty for offenders. During the same period, smoking was a crime punishable by death in both the Mogul empire and in Czarist Russia. *(Paul Stirling Hagerman, in It's a Weird World, p. 81 & 82)***

**On October 17, 1604, King James I wrote his smart treatise, A Counterblaste to Tobacco, which criticized the increasingly popular habit of smoking in Britain. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**Studies show that university professors who smoke are twice as likely to write textbooks. *(Paul Stirling Hagerman, in It's a Weird World, p. 61)***

**Package Deal: The woman in front of me at the supermarket check-out counter asked the clerk for three packs of a certain brand of long cigarettes and two packs of the brand's shorts. Then after a pause she said, "No, make it two packs of longs and three packs of shorts. I'm trying to cut down." *(Scott I. Harris, in Reader's Digest)***

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***