

# Smokin'!

You knew cigarettes were bad for your health. Did you know they also muck up your sex life?

October 1, 2005 By Laura Whitehorn

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Seattle HIVer Eric Bray was aware that smoking and HIV are a combustible mix: Cigarettes speed the development of many cancers and infections. Yet Bray couldn't quit. Once, after stopping, "I broke down and went to buy a pack," he says. "At the store, I saw a man in a wheelchair with an oxygen tank—buying cigs. 'It's a message from God,' I thought. That was six years ago—I haven't smoked since."

Should he be tempted, here's an antidote: A study found that some 120,000 British men are impotent from puffing and that smoking makes a gent 50% likelier to develop erectile dysfunction when he hits middle age.

Also to consider: Smoking makes you three times as likely to get wrinkles. Shriveled, stinky, can't get it up—sounds sexy! A British government-funded campaign encourages quitting with eye-popping images like the one above.

Your doc can help, too—with support groups, nicotine patches and scripts. Or call the American Cancer Society (800.ACS.2345) for aid in waiting to exhale.