

[IMAGE]

## When Weight Gain Works?

By Editorial Staff

In our world of weight-loss fads and fascinations (even with an increasing acceptance of body types), weight gain is rarely considered a positive event. That's a misconception since several situations actually make reasonable weight gain a sign of good health. One such situation is after a person has quit smoking. Here's why.

Research suggests smokers who gain weight after they quit smoking (a commonly echoed concern / rationale among smokers, particularly those who've lost weight while smoking) are healthier than if they'd kept the weight off, but continued smoking. Published in *JAMA Network Open*, the study found that while smoking cessation was accompanied by weight gain (substantial in some cases), "this was not associated with an increased risk of chronic diseases or an attenuation of the mortality benefit of cessation." In other words, quitting smoking was the healthier choice, hands down.

There are two clear morals to this story: First, if you're a smoker or knows someone who is, quitting / helping them to quit is the absolutely best option in terms of their health. After all, smoking is linked to an increased risk of just about every negative health impact you can think of; and the mere act of quitting (for even a single day) immediately improves your quality of life and health. Second, in terms of these study findings, weight gain should not be considered a health barrier for smokers considering quitting. However, you should be aware that weight gain could occur and consult with your doctor about proactive ways to control weight with activity and a balanced diet – something even non-smokers with weight challenges should be doing to help maximize their health.

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