

[IMAGE]

## Is Your Money Going Up in Smoke?

Attention smokers: If the health implications haven't motivated you to give up smoking, perhaps the wealth implications will! A new study shows that a person's net worth decreases by \$410, or about four percent, for each year he or she continues smoking.

Approximately 8,900 people born between 1957 to 1964 were surveyed in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth in 1985, 1992, 1994, and 1998 about several issues, including smoking habits and wealth. Wealth was assessed based on home values, savings, stocks, bonds and other assets; smokers were labeled "heavy" if they smoked more than one pack of cigarettes a day and "light" if they smoked less than one pack a day.

**Results:** By 1998, the final year of the study, participants identified as smokers averaged a net worth of about \$50,000. According to the researchers, smokers tend to come from lower socioeconomic classes; taking this into consideration, other factors that influence wealth were studied, including education, race and income. After taking these factors into account, researchers still found that the net worth of heavy smokers was approximately \$8,300 less than nonsmokers, while light smokers' net worth was roughly \$2,000 less than nonsmokers.

"While a casual relation cannot be proven, smokers appear to pay for tobacco expenditures out of income that is saved by nonsmokers. Hence, reductions in smoking will boost wealth, especially among the poor," the researchers said.

The moral of the story is clear: Smoking not only negatively affects your health, it negatively affects your wealth, too. Rather than spend your cash on unhealthy cigarettes, try investing in a smoking cessation program.

To learn more tips on keeping yourself healthy, visit [www.chiroweb.com/find](http://www.chiroweb.com/find).

*Reference:*

Zagorsky JL. The wealth effects of smoking. Tobacco Journal 2004;13: 370-74.

Newswise. Smoking hurts wealth as well as health. Feb 2, 2005. [www.newswise.com](http://www.newswise.com).

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