

What’s in a cigarette?



Products behind the puff

You may think that a cigarette is just tobacco rolled in a piece of paper. Tobacco is a plant, and how toxic can a plant be?

Here’s a list of 16 ingredients in cigarettes and the other products or processes in which you will find these ingredients.¹

Ingredient in cigarettes	Also used or found in these products and processes	Ingredient in cigarettes	Also used or found in these products and processes
Acetone	Nail polish remover	Formaldehyde	Embalming fluid
Acetic Acid	Hair dye	Hexamine	Barbeque lighter fluid
Ammonia	Householder cleaner	Lead	Batteries
Arsenic	Rat poison and pesticides	Naphthalene	Mothballs
Benzene	Rubber cement	Methanol	Rocket fuel
Butane	Lighter fluid	Nicotine	Insecticides
Cadmium	Battery acid	Tar	Road paving
Carbon monoxide	Released in car exhaust fumes	Toluene	Paint thinner

This is just a partial list of the harmful ingredients that you take into your lungs while smoking. Cigarette smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals and chemical compounds that can damage nearly every organ of the body, at least 70 of which are known specifically to cause cancer. It’s no surprise that smokers miss more work, visit a doctor and are hospitalized more often and die 10 to 12 years earlier than nonsmokers.



Sources:

1. American Lung Association. What's In a Cigarette? July 13, 2020. Available from www.lung.org.

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