

# The facts:

Smoking "low-tar" or "light" cigarettes does not lower your risk of dying from smoking. Quitting does, no matter how long you've smoked. And the health benefits are immediate.

Half of all regular smokers, whether they smoke light or regular cigarettes, will suffer a long and painful death from a tobacco-caused disease, losing an average of 8 years of their life. At least 25% of smokers lose 23 years of life.

## The tobacco industry in its own words

One previously secret memo by senior Philip Morris employees indicates how Marlboro achieved lower levels of tar by changing the laboratory testing method but not the product.

*"You already know about the EEC mandate to reduce all deliveries to 15 mg. As we knew this was going to happen as early as 1988, we began to develop a strategy to react... The 3 year effort resulted in a new method (now known as the 'new ISO') which reduces the smoke delivery results by about 1 mg at the 16 mg level. The Marlboro sold in the EEC was initially delivering about 15.5 mg prior to any analytical new technology change. When the new system was implemented, the deliveries were around 14.5 mg, but remember, **no product change ever took place...**"\**

\* Bourlas M. 1993 Memo to P Alvis, subject: Marlboro Product Quality in the EEC/ Tar Reduction. April 19, 1993, Philip Morris. Bates 2500055616/5616A, www.pmdocs.com



No matter how you dress up the package, the product still kills.\*

Think "light" and regular cigarettes are different? Think again.

World No Tobacco Day May 31 2006  
Tobacco: Deadly in any form or disguise



<http://www.paho.org/>

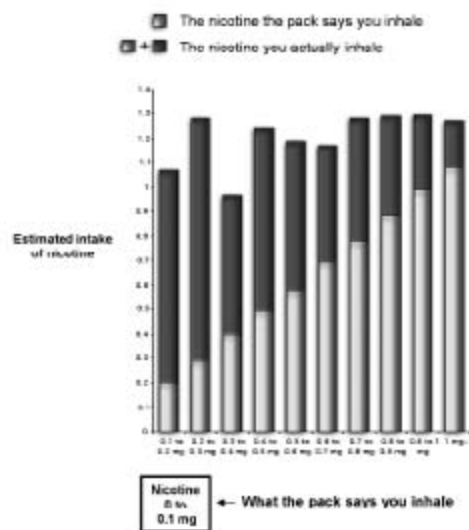
\* With apologies to sharks and crocodiles. Worldwide, seven people died from shark attacks in 2005. No record is kept of deaths worldwide from crocodile attacks, but about two deaths per year are estimated in Australia. Tobacco kills 19,000 Australians and 5 million people worldwide every year.



## “Light” and “low-tar” cigarettes are as harmful as regular cigarettes

Many smokers choose “low-tar,” “mild,” “light,” or “ultra-light” cigarettes because they think that these cigarettes may be less harmful to their health than “regular” or “full-flavor” cigarettes. Light cigarettes are no safer than regular cigarettes. The tobacco industry developed “light” cigarette brands to create the illusion of reduced exposure and reduced harmfulness by delivering smoke that generally feels smoother and cooler in the throat and chest. This feeling was coupled with advertising claims of reduced content of tar, nicotine and other toxins.

**The truth** is that light cigarettes do not reduce the health risks of smoking because they do not contain less tar or nicotine, as shown in the graph. That means that smokers of light cigarettes get cancer, heart disease, emphysema and other deadly diseases as often as smokers of regular cigarettes.



Source: Cancer Research UK

## Lower tar and nicotine numbers on light cigarette packs are misleading

**Why?** “Low-tar” and “low-nicotine” readings do not represent what smokers actually inhale. The amounts of tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide printed on packages are based on what a machine smokes. The machine, unlike real smokers, has a constant puff rate, puff length, depth of inhalation, and length of butt end. The tobacco industry has designed light cigarettes to trick the smoking machine. “Lights” have tiny air vents in the filter to dilute the amount of tar and nicotine that gets to the machine. This is why they get lower readings.

Real people don’t smoke “low-tar” cigarettes the same way as the testing machines. They change how they smoke to get the nicotine that their body needs.

**How?** They often cover the air vents with their lips or fingers so more tar and nicotine gets into their lungs. They also take more puffs and longer puffs, inhale more deeply and smoke more of the cigarette.

**What does this mean?** Smokers get as much tar and nicotine from “low-tar” cigarettes as they would from “regular” cigarettes. And studies show that they also have the same chance of getting cancer, heart attacks, strokes, emphysema and other deadly diseases as smokers of “regular” cigarettes.

Go to [www.paho.org/tobacco](http://www.paho.org/tobacco) to find out how to quit smoking and the truth about misleading cigarette labels.