

SMOKING CITED AS TOP CAUSE OF LIVER CANCER

Cigarette smoking is predicted to kill one billion people this century.

Tobacco is the cause of one of five cancers deaths, or 1.4 million deaths, worldwide each year. An estimated 1.25 billion men and women currently smoke cigarettes, and more than half of them will die from the habit.

This is the grim scenario health organizations have painted about the ill effects of cigarette smoking. "Its yearly death toll keeps going up and the bad news is, maraming mga batang-bata pa, natututo ng manigarilyo," said Dr. Juanito A. Rubio, executive director of the Lung Center of the Philippines (LPC).

The primary cause (85 percent) of lung cancer is related to smoking. Other diseases caused by smoking are heart and brain attacks. In the Philippines alone, 35,000 Filipinos die annually due to smoking. Rubio mentioned a research on tobacco conducted by the World Organization (WHO) which showed that "tobacco companies used chemicals to increase the addictiveness of nicotine, to widen the lung passages for faster absorption of the smoke, to mask the taste and add flavor to sweetness."

"To make smokeless objectionable to non-smokers, chemicals are also added to mask smell, irritability, and visibility of smoke," he said. According to Cancer Atlas, one of two statistics-packed guides that chart global tobacco and cancer (the other is Tobacco Atlas. Both are published by the American Cancer Society), tobacco accounts for one in five cancer deaths, or 1.4 million deaths worldwide each year.

It said: "When deaths from tobacco-related cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases are included, the yearly death toll rises to nearly five million and it is expected to keep going up. Cancer Atlas also said that by 2020, there will be 16 million new cases a year and 20 million deaths due to smoking. An estimated 70 percent of those death, it said, will occur in developing countries.