

Quitting smoking may be one of the most difficult challenges of your life. Evidence suggests that combining the nicotine patch with nicotine gum or nicotine nasal spray increases long-term quit rates. Researchers recommend combining nicotine replacement therapy with advice or counseling from a physician, dentist, pharmacist or other health care provider.

STEP
4

STAY QUIT: How to brave the crave

OK. So you've rid your world (as best you can) of the influence of cigarettes. Avoid situations that you associate with smoking and keep in mind that relapse is easy if you are (a) tired, (b) hungry, (c) drinking alcohol, (d) angry or (e) lonely.

CRAVE CONTROL

- **Get** plenty of rest.
- **Concentrate** on a healthy diet heavy on fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- **Avoid** alcohol and caffeine, which may stimulate nicotine cravings. Avoid social situations with people who smoke.
- **Resolve** your differences and reach out for someone who cares.
- **Join** a smoking cessation group.
- **Ask** your health care provider for help. Discuss nicotine replacement options (gum, patches, nasal sprays) and helpful medications such as Zyban.
- **Explore** alternative therapies such as acupuncture, acupressure and hypnosis.



Note: Relapse rates are most common in the first few weeks or months after quitting. Stay quit for three months and you're more likely to remain cigarette-free for the rest of your life.

Staying the Course

Smoking may be a natural part of the day-to-day routine of your life. Combined with nicotine addiction, that can make staying quit very difficult.

Don't be discouraged if you slip and smoke one or two cigarettes. All is not lost. One cigarette is better than an entire pack. However, one here or there may quickly lead to a full-fledged habit again.



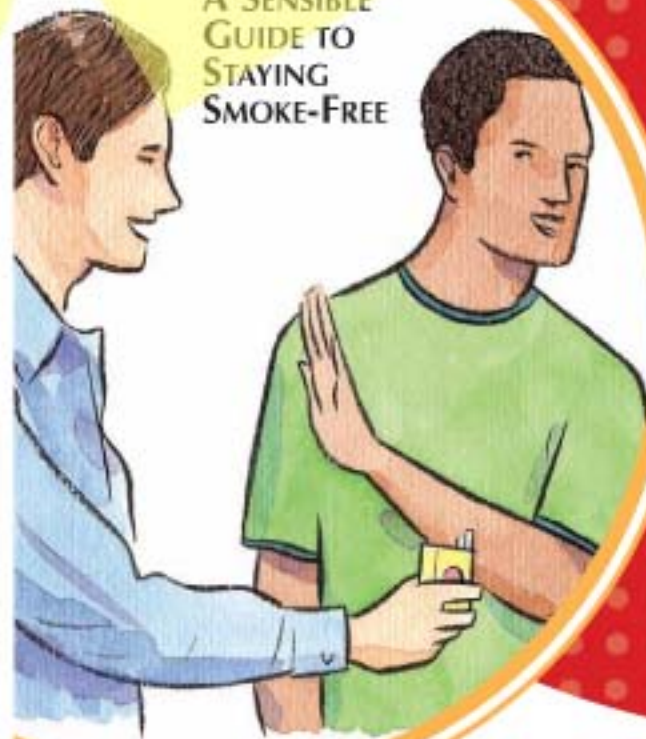
IF YOU SLIP ...

- **Accept** you've had a small setback and put it behind you.
- **Don't** beat yourself up. You're not a failure. Understand what led you to puff, and start over with your quit routine.
- **Get back to business** right away. Recall why you want to quit. Photos of your children or other visible reminders can help.
- **Remember** your success. Think back to the time you lived without smoking.
- **Identify** your triggers. Decide now how you will cope with them again. Urges come and go. Wait them out, find distractions and be optimistic that the urges will subside.
- **Manage** stress before it weakens your resolve. **Ideas:** cultivating positive thinking, relaxation, pursuing hobbies, reaching out to others. Ask your health care provider about counseling and other resources.
- **Stay** with it if you are taking medication as part of your smoking cessation program, even if you've slipped a little. Check with your health care provider if you have concerns.

Final thought: Take one day at a time. Quitting can be a long, difficult process. But millions of people have succeeded, and you can too.

NEVER SMOKE AGAIN

A SENSIBLE
GUIDE TO
STAYING
SMOKE-FREE



READY OR NOT?

Nicotine is an addictive drug found in cigarettes. That's why quitting smoking is so hard. If you've tried several times to kick the cigarette habit, you know the agony of both the physical and the psychological withdrawal processes.

Breaking free from these addictions takes time. People usually make three or more attempts before becoming smoke-free. But keep quitting: It's never too late and it's worth it.

When you stop smoking, your body immediately begins repairing the damage from tobacco use. Your risk of heart disease, stroke, chronic bronchitis, emphysema and several kinds of cancer starts to decline. Millions of heavy smokers have managed to stay quit. So can you.

4-STEP START

- 1 Think
- 2 Prepare
- 3 Quit
- 4 Stay Quit



STEP

2

PREPARE: Setting the stage for success

More than 90 percent of successful quitters do so on their own. Your way will be unique to you and based on your own habit. **Start with these tips:**

1. **Write** down the reason(s) you want to quit.
2. **Consult** your health care provider, who can provide guidance and improve your chances for success.
3. **Set** a target date and don't change it. **Note:** Consider the least stressful time of year for you.
4. **Go public:** Tell family, friends and co-workers.
5. **Line up** a call list of supporters and other successful quitters.
6. **Discard** all cigarettes and lighters.
7. **Load** ashtrays with gum or hard candy.
8. **Plan** distraction activities.
9. **Promise** yourself a reward.



What about a program?

An assisted quit-smoking program or support group provides advice that can help you

- **understand why you smoke,**
- **handle withdrawal and stress,**
- **resist the urge to smoke.**

Fear of Fat

Some smokers who quit gain weight, 6 to 10 pounds, according to some studies. The health benefits of becoming smoke-free far outweigh the problem of gaining a few pounds.

You can offset any weight gain with regular heart-pumping exercise. Exercising several times a week will not only help you control weight, it can also boost your mood, ease stress and help relieve the cravings for nicotine.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

can last for a few days or several weeks. **Know how to cope.**

- **Trouble sleeping:** Avoid coffee, tea or soda with caffeine for several hours before bedtime.
- **Hunger:** Fight cravings with low-calorie snacks. **Ideas:** air-popped popcorn, rice cakes, low-fat yogurt.
- **Feeling something's missing:** Occupy your mouth with gum, cinnamon sticks, carrots or celery ... your fingers with a pen, woodworking or gardening ... and your mind with puzzles, games and light reading.
- **Tiredness:** Nap as needed for the first 1-2 weeks.
- **Headache:** Drink plenty of water to help flush nicotine from your system; take a warm shower; exercise.



STEP

3

QUIT: Clearing the first hurdles

The first weeks after quitting may be the hardest as you begin to overcome physical addiction and psychological dependency. **The American Cancer Society lists the following as symptoms of withdrawal:**

- **Trouble sleeping**
- **Trouble concentrating**
- **Restlessness**
- **Irritability**
- **Headache**
- **Increased appetite**
- **Tiredness**
- **Depression**
- **Feelings of frustration and anger**



- **Depression:** Talk to your health care provider about what is right for you.
- **Restlessness and irritability:** Get some fresh air; soak in a hot bath; meditate; exercise; breathe deeply.
- **Feeling cranky, frustrated or mad:** Stay upbeat with hobbies you enjoy; change your scenery; meditate or exercise. Spend time with cheerful people.

Remember: You will feel good again.

STEP

1

THINK: Mapping a healthy mind-set

Your success in quitting may depend on why you smoke and how motivated you are to stop. Check the boxes that apply to you.

Why do I smoke?

- It's relaxing and feels good.
- It gives me a lift when I'm tired.
- I like the ritual of lighting up and holding a cigarette.
- I'm addicted to nicotine.
- It calms me down when I'm stressed or depressed.

Read on for solutions and healthier alternatives.