

SMOKING

Your Guide to Giving Up Cigarettes for Good



Time to Put Smoking Behind You

Quitting smoking is one of the most important steps you can take for your health. Smoking doesn't just cause lung cancer. It also causes or contributes to other lung diseases such as emphysema and asthma, puts you at higher risk for stroke and heart disease, and is associated with cancers of the mouth, throat, stomach, cervix, pancreas and urinary tract.

Quitting smoking will also increase many of the pleasures of life. You'll be able to smell fresh air and perfume, taste subtle flavors, save money and play with your children without getting winded. What are you waiting for?

Don't Go It Alone

Support systems you can use:

PEOPLE. Tell your friends, family, neighbors and co-workers when you're planning to quit, and ask them for help. They can keep you busy, be an encouraging voice on the other end of the telephone and help you resist the urge to smoke.

NICOTINE REPLACEMENT. Nicotine patches and gum are now available over the counter. They can help combat cravings, especially during the first few days when your body is ridding itself of nicotine and other toxins.

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS. Your pharmacist can answer questions about nicotine replacement products, and your doctor can prescribe medication (nicotine inhalers and nasal sprays or Zyban) that might make quitting easier and give you tips on nutrition, exercise and withdrawal.

QUIT-SMOKING CLASSES. Research has shown that drug therapies are often more effective when combined with quit-smoking counseling and support. Sometimes meeting with others who are trying to quit can help you stay the course. Some communities have a Nicotine Anonymous 12-step group (look in your Yellow Pages for listings). The American Cancer Society (1-800-ACS-2345), American Lung Association, local hospitals or your area health department also may sponsor groups in your area.



Common Smoking Triggers

Idle hands
Ending a meal
Anxiety and stress
Boredom
Coffee, alcohol
Bars, parties, sporting events
Your smoking friends

Solutions

Knit, doodle, play with a pencil.
Take a walk after dinner, go out for dessert, get up from the table right away.
Practice relaxation techniques, put something in your mouth (carrot, sugarless gum) besides a cigarette.
Exercise, play a game, read a thriller.
Drink juice and water.
Avoid places where you can smoke. Go to the movies, a museum, a nonsmoker's house or the mall.
Explain that you are trying to quit, and at least for a while spend time with nonsmokers instead.

Helping a Loved One Quit

You probably already know that nagging, arguing and guilt don't work — in fact, they may increase tension and make the person want to smoke more. Instead, try these strategies:

Pay positive attention. Take walks, cook meals together, exercise, go shopping, see a movie. Indulge in activities you enjoy that don't involve cigarettes.

Put yourself in their shoes. Imagine what it would be like to give up your favorite activity. That's how the person trying to quit sometimes feels. Treat him or her with compassion.

Practice patience. Try not to strike back if your friend or relative is irritable or grouchy toward you.

Reward. A hug or an "I'm proud of you" can be great encouragement.



Coping With Withdrawal

Withdrawal isn't just physical, it's psychological too. The trick is to stay calm, cool and collected in the face of cravings. **Withdrawal busters:**

- For a dry mouth or sore throat, sip ice water or juice, or chew sugarless gum.
- For headaches and anxiety, take a warm bath and try meditating or simply breathing deeply for 10 minutes.
- Increase the fiber (fruits, vegetables, whole grains) in your diet to reduce irregularity.
- Take a daily nap to beat fatigue. Don't overschedule yourself, and get plenty of sleep.
- Exercise every day to reduce your stress and irritability.
- Use positive affirmation. Repeat "I am a nonsmoker" to yourself several times a day.
- Every time you want a cigarette, take a deep breath in, count to 10, and release it.

Don't Give Up

Having one or two cigarettes does not have to mean you're smoking again. Rather than berating yourself for failing, recommit yourself to quitting with each new day.

Did You Know?

According to the U.S. surgeon general, smoking kills more people every year than AIDS, homicides, motor vehicle accidents and fires.