

Quit Smoking Tips



Smoking is a major cause of preventable death in the United States today. Non-smokers who are around secondhand smoke are also at an increased risk for serious health conditions. Here's the good news - the sooner you quit, the sooner your body will begin to recover. Health benefits begin within the first 20 minutes of the last cigarette smoked and continue for years. By quitting smoking you reduce the risk of lung and other cancers, heart disease, stroke and peripheral vascular disease. You will also look and feel healthier, have whiter teeth, fresher breath, along with an improved sense of taste and smell. And, you will save money. For example, if you smoke one pack per day, quitting smoking could save you up to \$150 a month.

Consider the following tips to get started:

- **Decide to quit.** Making a decision to quit is the first step in becoming smoke-free. Decide on a quit date and write it down. Tell your family members, friends, your doctor and dentist, and enlist their support.
- **Make a list.** Write down all the reasons why you want to quit and post the list where you will see it. Perhaps one reason is to cut down your risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, and improve your respiratory health. Or, perhaps you want to feel better when running around with your kids.
- **Clean house.** Get rid of all tobacco and tobacco-related objects, such as ashtrays, lighters, or spit cups.
- **Change your schedule.** Many times, tobacco cravings are associated with certain activities or people. Make changes where you can. For example, if you always had a cigarette after dinner, try talking a walk instead.
- **Learn more.** Find out about how nicotine affects your body, and what to expect during nicotine withdrawal. Knowing what some of the symptoms are may help you be better prepared to deal with them. Some symptoms include: bad mood, increased eating, intense tobacco cravings.
- **Look into tobacco cessation products.** While it isn't for everyone, some people have found success using over the counter nicotine gum, patches or lozenges. You can also talk to your doctor about tobacco cessation medications that may help you.
- **Stay focused.** Focus on one day (smoke-free) at a time. Try breaking the day into segments. Don't let setbacks discourage you. Many people try to quit several times before they quit for good. If you have tried quitting before, think back on your past experiences and think about what helped and where you struggled.
- **Take care of yourself.** Exercise regularly, eat a healthy diet, and get plenty of sleep each night. Often, healthy actions encourage more healthy actions. Make a healthy change today!
- **Be patient.** Time is on your side. Nearly all smokers have some feelings of nicotine withdrawal when they try to quit. Give yourself a month to get over these feelings. Over time, you'll feel more confident fighting the urge to smoke.



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