



Help! I Smoke and I want To Quit!

Why should I quit smoking?

Topping the list of major risk factors of our No. 1 — heart and blood vessel disease — is cigarette smoking. Smoking causes almost one-fifth of deaths from heart disease. The number of diseases, cancers and deaths due to smoking is frightening. Smoking is harmful to thousands of non-smokers who are exposed to second

hand smoke, including infants and children.

Scientific evidence has shown that the effects of cigarette smoking should cause you to worry about its effects not only on your health but the health of your loved ones.

What steps should I take to quit smoking?

Step 1

- List reasons why you want to quit smoking and read them aloud several times a day.
- Try to think of yourself as a non-smoking several times a day. Think on social settings and other activities when you would be most likely to smoke and use your imagination to get a visual picture of yourself doing these things without smoking.


Step 2

- Keep all smoke related products away from you such as lighters, matches, cigarettes, chewing tobacco, etc.
- Try to smoke fewer cigarettes each day.
- Keep reading your list of reasons to quit and keep picturing yourself as a non-smoker.

Step 3

- Set a target date to quit.
- Continue with Step 2.
- Don't buy a new pack of cigarettes until you finish the opened pack.
- Try to go 48 hours without a cigarette.

Step 4

- Quit completely. Wet and throw out all cigarettes and matches.
 - Try to do something to keep your mind off smoking. Go outside, take a long walk with a loved one or ride a bike.
 - Find healthy substitutes for smoking. Carry around gum or artificially sweetened mints.
 - Keep busy. Take up a hobby or a craft to keep your hands busy.
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Tips to quit smoking

- If you feel that you cannot quit smoking alone, have a friend who smokes quit with you.
 - Change your smoking routines. For example, try smoking with your opposite hand or keep your hands in a different place.
 - When you smoke, smoke outdoors.
 - When you want a cigarette, wait a few minutes, try to think of something to do other than smoking, and do it. You might want to chew a piece of gum or drink a glass of water instead of smoking.
 - Buy 1 pack of cigarettes a day. Try switching to a brand you don't like.
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One the day you quit smoking....

- Get rid of all cigarettes, ashtrays, lighters, matches, pipes, etc.
 - When you get the urge to smoke, do something else instead like go and watch a movie, take a long walk with somebody close, or do something that will get your mind off cigarettes.
 - Reward yourself at the end of the day for not smoking with a movie or your favorite meal or something special to you that makes you feel happy, except a cigarette.
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Remember why you quit

- Tell your friends and family that you have quit and are done with smoking.
 - Drink plenty of water.
 - When you feel stressed out and feel like you need a cigarette go out and exercise.
 - Be conscious about spending time with smokers, try to find or spend time with those who do not smoke.
 - Reward yourself! Get an empty jar and fill it with the money you would have spent on cigarettes. Do this for about 4 months and see how much money you will have for savings and other enjoyment that you would have spent on cigarettes that day.
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When you feel the urge to smoke....

- Say, "STOP!!!" to yourself, even out loud.
 - Respect the reasons why you quit. Tell yourself you can wait out the urge since most urges for a cigarette pass within about 2 minutes.
 - Put something in your mouth, sip some water, and chew on some ice or some sugarless gum. Always keep your hands busy try paper clips, doodling, crossword puzzles, etc.
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What should I do if I relapse?

- If you slip and smoke, DO NOT GET DISCOURAGED. It takes most smokers 7 times before they can kick the habit for good. Don't think of yourself as a failure or that you can't be a non-smoker. Just get yourself back on the right track. Quickly find and evaluate what made you smoke again. Beware of that trigger so you can prevent that from happening again.
- Look at the positive side of things — maybe you reduced the number of cigarettes you smoke or began to adopt a healthy lifestyle, such as exercise. Remember, trying to quit smoking is always good. It shows that you are trying to take control of your life. Give it some time. Set another quit date and quit once and for all.

To learn more about quitting smoking....

Call the American Heart Association (AHA) AT 800.242.8721 or visit their website at www.americanheart.org.

Also, talk to your doctor, nurse, or other healthcare professionals.

Do you have questions or comments for your doctor or nurse?

Take a few minutes to write down what you would like to discuss with your healthcare provider. Here are some examples to start with.

1. When will the urges for cigarettes stop?
2. How can I keep from gaining weight?
3. Can I chew nicotine replacement gum?



We are committed to **being** the difference.
