Smoking Cessation, Tips for Success

YOU CAN QUIT SMOKING

If you are ready to quit smoking, congratulations! You have chosen to help yourself be healthier. Cigarettes bring nicotine, tar, carbon monoxide, and other irritants into your body. Your lungs, heart, and blood vessels will be able to work better without these poisons. There are lots of different ways to quit smoking. Nicotine gum, nicotine patches, a nicotine inhaler, or nicotine nasal spray help with physical craving. Hypnosis, support groups, and medicines help break the habit of smoking. Here are some tips to help you quit for good.

1. Throw away all cigarettes.
2. Clean and remove all ashtrays from your home, work, and car.
3. On a card, write down your reasons for quitting. Carry the card with you and read it when you get the urge to smoke.
4. Cleanse your body of nicotine. Drink enough water and fluids to keep your urine clear or pale yellow. Do this after quitting to flush the nicotine from your body.
5. Learn to predict your moods. Do not let a bad situation be your excuse to have a cigarette. Some situations in your life might tempt you into wanting a cigarette.
6. Never have "just one" cigarette. It leads to wanting another and another. Remind yourself of your decision to quit.
7. Change habits associated with smoking. If you smoked while driving or when feeling stressed, try other activities to replace smoking. Stand up when drinking your coffee. Brush your teeth after eating. Sit in a different chair when you read the paper. Avoid alcohol while trying to quit, and try to drink fewer caffeinated beverages. Alcohol and caffeine may urge you to smoke.
8. Avoid foods and drinks that can trigger a desire to smoke, such as sugary or spicy foods and alcohol.
9. Ask people who smoke not to smoke around you.
10. Have something planned to do right after eating or having a cup of coffee. Take a walk or exercise to perk you up. This will help to keep you from overeating.
11. Try a relaxation exercise to calm you down and decrease your stress. Remember, you may be tense and nervous in the first 2 weeks after you quit, but this will pass.
12. Find new activities to keep your hands busy. Play with a pen, coin, or rubber band. Doodle or draw things on paper.
13. Brush your teeth right after eating. This will help cut down on the craving for the taste of tobacco after meals. You can try mouthwash, too.
14. Use oral substitutes, such as lemon drops, carrots, a cinnamon stick, or chewing gum, in place of cigarettes. Keep them handy so they are available when you have the urge to smoke.
15. When you have the urge to smoke, try deep breathing.
16. Designate your home as a nonsmoking area.
17. If you are a heavy smoker, ask your caregiver about a prescription for nicotine chewing gum. It can ease your withdrawal from nicotine.
18. Reward yourself. Set aside the cigarette money you save and buy yourself something nice.
19. Look for support from others. Join a support group or smoking cessation program. Ask someone at home or at work to help you with your plan to quit smoking.
20. Always ask yourself, “Do I need this cigarette or is this just a reflex?” Tell yourself, “Today, I choose not to smoke,” or “I do not want to smoke.” You are reminding yourself of your decision to quit, even if you do smoke a cigarette.

HOW WILL I FEEL WHEN I QUIT SMOKING?

- The benefits of not smoking start within days of quitting.
- You may have symptoms of withdrawal because your body is used to nicotine (the addictive substance in cigarettes). You may crave cigarettes, be irritable, feel very hungry, cough often, get headaches, or have difficulty concentrating.

- The withdrawal symptoms are only temporary. They are strongest when you first quit but will go away within 10 to 14 days.
- When withdrawal symptoms occur, stay in control. Think about your reasons for quitting. Remind yourself that these are signs that your body is healing and getting used to being without cigarettes.
- Remember that withdrawal symptoms are easier to treat than the major diseases that smoking can cause.
- Even after the withdrawal is over, expect periodic urges to smoke. However, these cravings are generally short-lived and will go away whether you smoke or not. Do not smoke!
- If you relapse and smoke again, do not lose hope. Of the people who quit, 75% relapse. Most smokers quit 3 times before they are successful.
- If you relapse, do not give up! Plan ahead and think about what you will do the next time you get the urge to smoke.

LIFE AS A NONSMOKER: MAKE IT FOR A MONTH, MAKE IT FOR LIFE

Day 1 Hang this page where you will see it every day.
Day 2 Get rid of all ashtrays, matches, and lighters.
Day 3 Drink water. Breathe deeply between sips.
Day 4 Avoid places with smoke-filled air, such as bars, clubs, or the smoking section of restaurants.
Day 5 Keep track of how much money you save by not smoking.
Day 6 Avoid boredom. Keep a good book with you or go to the movies.
Day 7 Reward yourself! One week without smoking!
Day 8 Make a dental appointment to get your teeth cleaned.
Day 9 Decide how you will turn down a cigarette before it is offered to you.
Day 10 Review your reasons for quitting.
Day 11 Distract yourself. Stay active to keep your mind off smoking and to relieve tension.
Take a walk, exercise, read a book, do a crossword puzzle, or try a new hobby.
Day 12 Exercise. Get off the bus before your stop or use stairs instead of escalators.
Day 13 Call on friends for support and encouragement.
Day 14 Reward yourself! Two weeks without smoking!
Day 15 Practice deep breathing exercises.
Day 16 Bet a friend that you can stay a nonsmoker.
Day 17 Ask to sit in nonsmoking sections of restaurants.
Day 18 Hang up "No Smoking" signs.
Day 19 Think of yourself as a nonsmoker.
Day 20 Each morning, tell yourself you will not smoke.
Day 21 Reward yourself! Three weeks without smoking!
Day 22 Think of smoking in negative ways.
Remember how it stains your teeth, gives you bad breath, and shortens your breath.
Day 23 Eat a nutritious breakfast.
Day 24 Do not relive your days as a smoker.
Day 25 Hold a pencil in your hand when talking on the telephone.
Day 26 Tell all your friends you do not smoke.
Day 27 Think about how much better food tastes.
Day 28 Remember, one cigarette is one too many.
Day 29 Take up a hobby that will keep your hands busy.
Day 30 Congratulations! One month without smoking! Give yourself a big reward.

Your caregiver can direct you to community resources or hospitals for support, which may include:

- Group support.
- Education.
- Hypnosis.
- Subliminal therapy.

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