

Smoking: Quitting

Part Three

Today's the day you start your smoke-free life! Remind your family and friends that it's your quit date, so they can support you.

Use Your Support Program

If you decided to use a support program, use it to its full extent. Go to the sessions. Call the telephone quit line. The more support you get, the more likely you will quit for good.

Tips For Quitting Day

- Keep busy – go to a movie, exercise, take long walks, go bike riding, etc.
- Spend as much free time as you can where smoking isn't allowed, such as malls, libraries, museums, theaters, stores, church, etc.
- Hold something in place of a cigarette, such as a pencil, paper clip, marble or water bottle.
- Keep something else in your mouth, such as a toothpick, cinnamon stick, lollipop, hard candy, sugar-free gum or carrot sticks.
- Drink a lot of water and fruit juice. Avoid drinks like wine and beer that may tempt you to smoke.

Steer Clear of Temptation

- Instead of smoking after meals, get up from the table, brush your teeth or go for a walk.
- If you always smoke while driving, try listening to a new radio station or your favorite music. Take a different route or even different transportation for awhile such as the train or bus if possible.
- Stay away from things that you connect with smoking, such as watching your favorite TV show, sitting in your favorite chair or having a drink before dinner. Try this today and for the next few weeks.
- Do things and go places where smoking is not allowed. Keep doing this until you are confident about remaining smoke-free.
- Try to be near non-smokers if you must be somewhere you'll be tempted to smoke, such as a party or bar.

Manage Your Cravings

The urge to smoke will come and go. Try to wait it out. Consider the plan you made last week. You wrote down steps to refer back to in moments like this. Try them!

- Keep other things around instead of cigarettes. Try

- carrots, pickles, sunflower seeds, apples, celery, raisins or sugar-free gum.
- Wash your hands or the dishes when you want a cigarette.
- Learn to relax quickly by taking deep breaths.
- Light incense or a candle instead of a cigarette.
- Try a change of scenery, such as going outside or go to a different room. Or you can try to change your current activity.
- No matter what, don't think, "Just one won't hurt." It will undo all the hard work you have put in thus far.
- Remember that trying something to beat the urge is always better than trying nothing.



Find New Things to Do

Starting today you may want to create some new habits, such as:

- Swimming, jogging, playing tennis, bike riding or shooting baskets. It's hard to smoke and do these things at the same time.
- Keep your hands busy with crossword puzzles, needlework, painting, wood-working, gardening or household chores.
- Enjoy having a clean mouth. Brush your teeth often and use mouthwash.
- Take a stretch when you're tempted to reach for a cigarette.
- Set aside time for activities that satisfy and mean the most to you. There are natural breaks even during a busy day – after dinner, first thing in the morning or just before bed are good examples.
- Get plenty of rest while you get used to your smoke-free lifestyle.

Remember the Rewards

Instantly

- Your body begins to heal 20 minutes after your last cigarette. Poison gas and nicotine start to leave your body. Your pulse rate returns to normal, and the oxygen in your blood rises to normal.
- Within a few days you may notice your senses such as taste and smell are improving. You are breathing easier and your smoker's cough will

lessen.

- Nicotine leaves your body within three days. You may feel worse before you feel better, and feelings of withdrawal are difficult, but they are signs your body is healing.
- Long-term*
- You are adding full, healthy days to each year of your life.
 - You are greatly reducing your risk of death from lung cancer and other diseases including heart disease, stroke, chronic bronchitis, emphysema and at least 13 other kinds of cancer.
 - You are no longer poisoning those around you with secondhand smoke.
 - You are setting a good example; life without cigarettes is a longer, healthier and happier life.

Handle Withdrawal Symptoms

Common feelings of smoking withdrawal include:

- Feeling depressed
- Not being able to sleep
- Getting cranky, frustrated or mad
- Feeling anxious, nervous or restless
- Having trouble thinking clearly
- Feeling hungry or gaining weight

Not everyone experiences strong symptoms of withdrawal. You may have one or many of these problems, and how long they last can vary.

If You Slip Up

Don't be discouraged if you slip

up and smoke. It's not a lost cause – one cigarette is better than an entire pack. But that doesn't mean you can safely smoke every now and then, no matter how long ago you quit! One cigarette may seem harmless, but can quickly lead back to one or two packs a day. Many ex-smokers had to try stopping several times before finally succeeding. Slip-ups usually occur within the first three months after quitting. Here are some tips for dealing with a slip-up:

- Understand that you've had a small setback and this doesn't mean you are a smoker again.
- Don't be too hard on yourself. One slip-up doesn't make you a failure or mean you can't quit for good.
- Don't be too easy on yourself either. Don't think, "I've blown it, so I might as well smoke the rest of this pack." It's important to get right back on track. Remember, your goal is no cigarettes – not even one puff!
- Feel good about how long you went without smoking. Learn how to cope better next time.
- Realize and stay aware of what triggered your relapse. Figure out how you will cope better next time.
- Learn from your experiences and continue to use whatever works the best to keep you from smoking.
- If you are using medication to help you quit, don't stop after only one or two cigarettes. Keep using it; it will keep helping you.
- See your doctor or health professional to keep you motivated to stay smoke-free.

Did you know...?

Workplaces nationwide are going smoke-free to provide clean indoor air and protect employees from the life-threatening effects of secondhand smoke. Employers have a legal right to restrict smoking in the workplace, or implement a totally smoke-free workplace policy.