



Tobacco Cessation

PATIENT EDUCATION SERIES

Is it worth quitting?

If you're having trouble getting motivated, think about these benefits:

- Within 20 minutes of your last cigarette, blood pressure, pulse and body temperature return to normal.
- Within 8 hours of your last cigarette, carbon monoxide levels in the blood drop to normal and oxygen levels increase to normal.
- Within 2 days of quitting, nerve endings start to regrow and your ability to smell and taste improve.
- Within 3 months, circulation improves and lung function increases up to 30%.

Quitting requires preparation

- Know why you are quitting. List the benefits that this change will bring to you. Post them. Be specific.
- Tell your friends. This helps bolster your resolve. Set yourself up for success.
- Know your smoking patterns and routine and make changes as needed.
- Break old behavior patterns (coffee, phone, on way to class, when out with friends).
- Recruit a quitting buddy or support person.
- Join a group if needed.
- Eliminate tobacco products from your home.
- Plan regular exercise.
- Have low calorie snacks available.
- Collect the money you save for a special reward for yourself.

Prepare for withdrawal symptoms

- Tobacco craving: lasts a maximum of 3-5 minutes.
- Irritability, anxiety, restlessness, insomnia, fatigue, dizziness, and difficulty concentrating are common.
- Increased Appetite: Weight gain is 5-7 pounds on average the first few weeks; only 5% gain more than 20 pounds. You would have to gain 100 pounds to develop the same health risks that smoking creates.

Worried about weight gain?

Fear of weight gain prevents many people from quitting smoking. Nicotine suppresses normal appetite signals, but you can relearn how to eat. Learn to "listen" to your body's signals of true hunger and fullness:

- Try not to go longer than 2 to 4 hours without a meal or snack. This prevents you from getting too hungry.
- Throughout the day, eat smaller, more frequent meals and snacks.
- Eating breakfast is critical to stabilize brain chemistry and prevent late-day carbohydrate cravings.
- Respond to your cravings if you have them, but with small portions. Restricting food triggers binges and causes guilt. Don't put foods in "good/bad" categories.
- Emphasize unprocessed, whole foods, like whole grains and fresh fruit. These foods will keep your blood sugar stable and help your mood, too.
- Specific chemicals in ex-smokers' brains cause cravings for fats. Include a little fat or healthy oils in your meals. Your body chemistry needs these foods, and they will keep you from feeling hungry again soon.
- Cravings gradually disappear as eating patterns normalize. Regular, moderate exercise is very helpful in this process.

What do most quitters have in common?

- Strong desire to quit.
- Have been smokers for 10 or more years.
- Have developed a personal problem related to smoking.
- Smoke one or more packs per day.
- Have tried 3-5 times to quit before.
- Have developed a health problem related to smoking.

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What about relapse?

Learn from it!

- Did you make adequate preparation to quit?
- What happened?
- In what situation did you begin to use tobacco again?
- What people were with you?
- Could you have made another choice?
- What could you have done to avoid that cigarette or chewing tobacco?
- How can you deal with stress in a smoke-free fashion.
- There is a 60% chance of relapse in the first year.
- On average, an individual tries to quit 4-5 times before achieving success in staying tobacco-free.
- Changing behavior is not easy. It can take 7 to 10 years with 4 to 5 relapses.

Reasons to try to quit again

1. To prevent damaging health effects such as:
 - Shortness of breath
 - Decreased stamina and fatigue
 - Cold hands and feet
 - Colds, flu, asthma, and bronchitis
2. To prevent diseases of the teeth and gums.
3. To prevent skin wrinkling and aging.
4. To prevent lung cancer (87% related to tobacco use) and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (82% related to tobacco use). Damaging lung effects are reversible after you quit!
5. To decrease your risk of heart disease by 50% as soon as one year after you quit.
6. To be rid of an inconvenient, expensive, and odor causing habit.
7. To increase your self-esteem and be a good role model. Side-stream smoke inhaled by friends and family members is more damaging to them than what you inhale.

Remember: Every attempt you make improves your chances of quitting and staying quit!

How to quit

Many quit methods exist, but no method is clearly better for all smokers.

1. Cold turkey: Stop smoking without seeking assistance. 90% of smokers stop “on their own”.
2. Clock method: Delay gratification by increasing the amount of time between each cigarette or chew.
3. Slow withdrawal method: Taper/decrease the number of cigarettes smoked each day.
4. Behavioral modifications: This can be provided in a group or through the use of self-help booklets.
5. Nicotine replacement methods: Use the nicotine patch or gum to decrease the physiologic symptoms of dependency. The smoker still has to address the psychological and behavioral aspects of smoking. You must stop smoking immediately when nicotine replacement is started. Combining nicotine replacement with a behavioral program is most effective.
6. Hypnosis: This may be as effective as behavioral methods.
7. Acupuncture: Randomized trials have not proved its effectiveness, but some people find it works.
8. Combined medical approach: Discuss your desire to quit with a Health Services provider who can help decrease cravings. A short course of Zyban (Wellbutrin) in conjunction with the nicotine patch, behavior change, and regular follow-up appointments has helped many people quit.

For more information contact:

University Health Services 401.863-3953

Confidential medical care, including prescriptions for Zyban. Pamphlets on quitting smoking available throughout the building. Located at 13 Brown Street on the corner of Brown and Charlesfield Streets.

1-800-TRY TO STOP (1-800-879-8678)

www.trytostop.org

This helpline provides referrals to local programs, phone counseling and can mail out information packets. It is free, confidential and available in English and Spanish. Monday through Thursday, 9am to 7pm and Friday 9am to 5pm.

