



Smoking: Quitting

Part Three

Today is 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 a long walk or go bike riding.
- Spend as much free time as you can where smoking is not allowed, such as malls, libraries, museums, theaters, stores or church. Keep doing this until you are confident about remaining smoke-free.
- Hold something in place of a cigarette, such as a pencil, paper clip, or water bottle.
- Keep something else in your mouth, such as a toothpick, sugar-free hard candy or lollipops, sugar-free gum or carrot sticks.
- Drink a lot of water and 100 percent fruit juice. Avoid

drinks like wine and beer that may tempt you to smoke.

Steer Clear of Temptation

- Instead of smoking after meals, brush your teeth or go for a walk.
- If you always smoke while driving, try listening to a new radio station. 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 right away, and for the next few weeks.
- Try to be near non-smokers if you must be somewhere you will be tempted to smoke, such as a party or bar. Many bars and restaurants are now smoke-free; try one of them instead of your regular haunt.

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, 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.
- No matter what, do not 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 at all.

Find New Things to Do

Starting today you may want to create some new habits. Try:



- Swimming, jogging, playing tennis, bike riding or shooting baskets. It's hard to smoke and do these things at the same time.
- Keeping your hands busy with crossword puzzles, needlework, painting, wood-working, gardening or household chores.
- Enjoying having a clean and odor-free mouth! Brush your teeth often, and use mouthwash.
- Taking a stretch when temptation hits.
- Setting aside time for satisfying activities that 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.
- Getting 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 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 will include:

- Feeling depressed
- Not being able to sleep
- Getting cranky, frustrated or mad easily
- 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. Hang in there; these symptoms are only temporary.

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.

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, or implement a totally smoke-free workplace policy.