

The benefits of quitting

Compared to smokers, your...

- **Stroke** risk is reduced to that of a person who never smoked after five to 15 years of not smoking.
- **Cancers of the mouth, throat, and esophagus** risks are cut in half five years after quitting.
- **Cancer of the larynx** risk is reduced after quitting.
- **Coronary heart disease** risk is cut in half one year after quitting and is nearly the same as someone who never smoked 15 years after quitting.
- **Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease** risk of death is reduced after you quit. Lung cancer risk drops by as much as half 10 years after quitting.
- **Ulcer** risk drops after quitting.
- **Bladder cancer** risk is cut in half a few years after quitting
- **Peripheral artery disease** goes down after quitting.
- **Cervical cancer** risk is reduced a few years after quitting.
- **Low birth weight baby** risk drops to normal if you quit before pregnancy or during your first trimester.

Within 20 minutes after you smoke that last cigarette, your body begins a series of changes that continue for years.

- **20 Minutes After Quitting**
Your heart rate drops.
- **12 hours After Quitting**
Carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
- **2 Weeks to 3 Months After Quitting**
Your heart attack risk begins to drop.
Your lung function begins to improve.
- **1 to 9 Months After Quitting**
Your coughing and shortness of breath decrease.
- **1 Year After Quitting**
Your added risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.
- **5 Years After Quitting**
Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker's 5-15 years after quitting.
- **10 Years After Quitting**
Your lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker's.
Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas decreases.
- **15 Years After Quitting**
Your risk of coronary heart disease is back to that of a nonsmoker's.

Nicotine: A powerful addiction



If you have tried to quit smoking, you know how hard it can be. It is hard because nicotine is a very addictive drug. Usually people make a few attempts to quit before they succeed, but many quit on their first attempt. Each time you try to quit, you can learn about what helps and what hurts.

Quitting takes hard work and a lot of effort, but you can quit smoking. 50,000,000 (million) Americans have quit using tobacco, you can too!

Good reasons for quitting

Quitting smoking is one of the most important things you will ever do.

- You will live longer and live better.
- Quitting will lower your chance of having a heart attack, stroke, or cancer.
- If you are pregnant, quitting smoking will improve your chances of having a healthy baby.
- The people you live with, especially your children, will be healthier.
- You will have extra money to spend on things other than cigarettes.



Five keys for quitting

Studies have shown that these five steps will help you quit and quit for good. You have the best chances of quitting if you use them together.

1. Get ready.
2. Get support.
3. Learn new skills and behaviors.
4. Get medication and use it correctly.
5. Be prepared for relapse or difficult situations.



1. Get ready

- Set a quit date.
- Change your environment.
 - Throw out **ALL** cigarettes and ashtrays in your home, car, and place of work.
 - Ask visitors not to smoke in your home.
- Look at your past attempts to quit. Think about what worked and what did not.
- Once you quit, don't smoke again -- **NOT EVEN A PUFF!**

2. Get support

Research shows that you have a better chance of being successful if you have help. You can get support in many ways:

- Tell your family, friends, and co-workers that you are going to quit and want their support. Ask them not to smoke around you or leave cigarettes out in front of you.
- Talk to your health care provider (for example, doctor, dentist, nurse, pharmacist, psychologist, or smoking counselor).
- Get individual, group, or telephone counseling. The more counseling you have, the better your chances are of quitting. Find a program at a local hospital or health center. Call your local health department for information about programs in your area.

3. Learn new skills

- Try to distract yourself from urges to smoke. Talk to someone, go for a walk, or get busy with a task.
- When you first try to quit, change your routine. Take a different route to work. Drink tea instead of coffee. Eat breakfast in a different place.
- Try to reduce your stress. Take a hot bath, exercise, or read a book.
- Plan to do something every day that makes you happy.
- Drink a lot of water and other fluids.

4. Get medication

- Medications can help you reduce some of your urge to smoke.
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved these medications to help you quit smoking: the patch, nicotine gum, nicotine lozenges (available over the counter) and a nicotine inhaler, nasal spray and Zyban/Bupropion (all available by prescription)
- Ask your health care provider for advice and carefully read the information on the package.
- These medications can double your chances of quitting and quitting for good.
- Everyone who is trying to quit may benefit from using a medication. If you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant, nursing, under age 18, smoking fewer than 10 cigarettes per day, or have a medical condition, talk to your doctor or other health care provider before taking medications.

5. Be prepared

Most relapses happen within the first three months after quitting. Don't be discouraged if you start smoking again. Remember, most people try to quit several times before they are successful. Here are some difficult situations to watch for:

- **Alcohol.** Avoid drinking alcohol. Drinking lowers your chances of success.
- **Other Smokers.** Being around smoking can make you want to smoke.
- **Weight Gain.** Many smokers will gain weight when they quit, usually less than 10 pounds. Eat a healthy diet and stay active. Don't let weight gain distract you from your main goal.

