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On the Road to Quitting

Guide to becoming a non-smoker



Canada 

Health Canada is the federal government department responsible for helping Canadians maintain and improve their health. We assess the safety of drugs and consumer products, help improve the safety of food, and provide information to Canadians to help them make healthy decisions. We work with the provinces to ensure health care is based on need and not on ability to pay. We provide health care services to First Nations people living on reserve and to Inuit communities.

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On the Road to Quitting

Guide to becoming a non-smoker

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For further information or to obtain additional copies, please contact:

Publications

Health Canada

Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9

Tel.: (613) 954-5995

Fax: (613) 941-5366

E-Mail: info@hc-sc.gc.ca

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Choosing to quit:

It's about knowing who you really are and deciding what you want.

Taking action.

This guide will help you to prepare and take action to successfully stop smoking. Take the time to think about the issues and follow the steps. Move at your own pace. If you do, you'll be able to set and reach your goal.

Something to think about...

- almost four in five Canadians over the age of 15 are non-smokers
- smoking is no longer socially acceptable for the majority of Canadians
- most ex-smokers wish they had quit much earlier – or never started at all – and some say that quitting wasn't as hard as they had thought it would be.

Think of other tough decisions that you've faced in the past and how good it felt once you made the right choice.

Quitting will make you feel like this and much more: strong, healthy and confident!



Did you know?

- No matter how long you've smoked, you'll enjoy improved health by quitting smoking.
- A pack-a-day smoker can spend more than \$2,500 a year on cigarettes!
- Thousands of Canadians just like you will quit smoking for good this year.

Quitting will improve your life in ways you'll see and feel

You smoke for many reasons.

It may be a habit or an addiction, or both. You may like how it makes you look or feel. It may help you relax, give you energy, give you time to yourself, or distract you from stress. It may be something you share with others. You may even think it helps to control your weight.

But you have better reasons to quit.

Whatever it may give you, smoking takes away much more. It seriously harms your health, each time you light up. It can lead to deadly cancers, chronic lung and heart disease, and an early and painful death. These are proven facts.

It's not just about your health.

Quitting will give you a real and powerful sense of self-control...right now! You will feel, perform and look better. You won't have to leave your house or workplace just to smoke. Your relationships with non-smokers will improve. Your sense of taste and smell will improve. You'll be a better role model for children. You won't have to worry about other people being exposed to second-hand smoke from your cigarettes.

Take a few moments now to think about what you want to achieve by quitting, including how you would like to improve your health, image, relationships and finances.



It's the single best thing you can do to improve your life and health.

Quitters immediately begin to reduce the risks of developing heart disease, cancer and breathing problems.

Former smokers live longer than those who continue to smoke. For example, those who quit before age 50 have only half the chance of dying from a smoking-related disease in the next 15 years compared with those who continue to smoke.

The health benefits of quitting occur for all types of smokers, men and women, young and old.

In fact, your body will start to heal within 24 hours of quitting:

- Within 8 hours, the carbon monoxide level drops in your body and the oxygen level in your blood increases to normal
- Within 48 hours, your chances of having a heart attack start to go down and your sense of smell and taste begin to improve
- Within 72 hours, your lung capacity increases and breathing becomes easier
- Within 2 weeks to 3 months, blood circulation improves and your lung functioning increases up to 30 percent
- Within 6 months, coughing, sinus congestion, tiredness and shortness of breath improve
- Within 1 year, your risk of suffering a smoking-related heart attack is cut in half
- Within 10 years, the risk of dying from lung cancer is cut in half
- Within 15 years, the risk of dying from a heart attack is equal to a person who never smoked.

Did you know?

- Changing just one or two of your smoking routines can give you the control and motivation to change for good.
- Cutting down gradually on the number of cigarettes you smoke each day will help lessen your dependence.



You can change your smoking behaviours

Smoking is probably something you do without thinking.

If you're like most smokers, you probably reach for a cigarette automatically when you do or feel certain things, when you're with other smokers, or as part of your daily routines.

Learn your smoking "triggers."

When do you routinely smoke? Drinking coffee or alcohol, relaxing after work or a meal, talking on the phone, driving, or feeling stressed or angry are common smoking "triggers" – things that may make you want to smoke. Try using the Tracking Card inserted into this guide to note what you're doing and feeling each time you reach for a cigarette.

Break the connection between smoking and your routines.

Anticipate your triggers. Try to delay lighting up by keeping your hands and mouth busy with other things. Drink a glass of cold water, brush your teeth, or enjoy a low-calorie snack. Stretch, take a walk, or talk with a non-smoking friend.

Think about the times when you almost always reach for a cigarette. Then, whenever these things, feelings or situations occur, ask yourself: "Do I really need this cigarette? Do I even really want to smoke? Can I wait or just do something else?"



Did you know?

- Nicotine is highly addictive but not all smokers experience prolonged cravings or other withdrawal symptoms.
- Cravings and urges rarely last longer than a few minutes. You can see past them and work through them.
- Three or four days after quitting, withdrawal symptoms diminish and almost always disappear within ten days.

You can break your nicotine addiction

Your brain has learned to depend on nicotine.

This highly addictive chemical in tobacco makes you feel energized, alert or calm. Over time, your brain gets used to it. It thinks the extra stimulation is normal. So when nicotine leaves your system, soon after smoking, your brain begins to crave it. You feel uncomfortable without it and get the urge to smoke again.

You can teach it not to.

As you smoke less, your brain also gets used to having less nicotine. You may get cravings or feel irritable or “down” for a while, but these things never last long. The more cravings you resist, the fewer you will have. They will soon be much shorter and weaker. Your brain will soon naturally replace the artificial “lift” you got from nicotine. This will happen no matter how long or how much you have smoked.

The four “Ds”:

- Delay lighting up when you get the urge to smoke.
- Distract yourself until the craving stops with thoughts and activities that take your mind off smoking.
- Drink water to occupy your hands and mouth.
- Deep breathing will help you stay focussed and relaxed. It's simple and it works!

You have what it takes!

You have already dealt successfully with things in your life that are uncomfortable and difficult to control. You have what it takes to successfully stop smoking!



Did you know?

- When you focus on something that you *have* to do, you often see it as something that will be hard to do. You may think of how much effort it will take.
- When you focus on something that you *want* to do, you see it as something that you can do. You think about “how” – not “if” – and on the skills that you do have to make it happen.
- Many of the skills you have used to meet challenges in the past – such as defining a goal and achieving it with determination – will also help you quit.

Facing your roadblocks and focussing on success

It's okay to have doubts.

Quitting smoking is about making a change in your life. It's about walking away from something that may have been part of your life for a long time – something you've come to depend on. You may be worried about how hard it might be, about reactions from friends who still smoke, about giving up time to yourself, about gaining weight, or even about losing a part of who you are. It's normal to have doubts. But remember...

Every challenge has a solution.

Quitting isn't one big challenge – it's a series of small ones. You can meet each one, including cravings, with clear thinking.

- Smoking doesn't really help you relax, it's just something you're used to doing while you take a break.
- The average weight gain for people who quit is about five to six pounds – healthy eating and active living will help you shed those pounds once you're feeling good about yourself as a non-smoker.
- Your friendships don't depend on smoking – there's much more to true friendship than that! Furthermore, your self-confidence will improve when you quit smoking.

Every step is a success.

You're never too old or too addicted to quit. Deciding to quit, taking the first step and continuing to try are all things to be proud of and feel good about. They're as much a part of your success as actually living smokefree. Because with quitting, as with every form of positive change, success isn't something you find, it's something you create, day by day. In time, small changes can lead to big transformations – like a smokefree life!

www.gosmokefree.ca

Health Canada's website also offers a free eight-week e-mail message service called *e-Quit* that's already helped thousands of smokers. The program is based on the material in this guide.

Dealing with stress

Stress caused by smoking.

Over time, your body often needs more and more nicotine to get that short burst of energy or temporary calm. Nicotine causes your heart rate and blood pressure to rise – thus adding even more stress to your body! Worrying about the impact of your smoking on your own health or that of your family and friends is also very stressful to most people.

Trying to stop smoking can be a source of stress.

The prospect of dealing with withdrawal symptoms and having to change your routine can be stressful for many people. Some people describe quitting smoking like losing an old friend.

Positive ways to overcome stress.

Learning what to expect when you quit smoking and how to deal with withdrawal symptoms will help greatly to increase your self-confidence and reduce your stress level. For example, begin by making some time for yourself each day for relaxation (e.g. listen to soft music, read a good book, enrol in a fun course at a local school, or try yoga – a good way to relax). Plan regular rewards for yourself to celebrate your accomplishments. Maintain a healthy diet and eat proper meals at regular intervals. Becoming more physically active helps to release calming chemicals in the brain and promote better sleep. Don't dwell on your problems, find one or two people with whom you can talk to explore solutions.

Learn to deep breathe.

Take a slow deep breath in through your nose and hold it for a count of five. Push your tummy out at the same time. This makes the air go deeper into your lungs, where the smoke used to go. Slowly breathe out through your mouth to the count of seven. Repeat this three times, and feel the relaxation as your stress drops away.

ARE YOU READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP?

If you're ready to quit,
the next section will help you follow through!

If you're not,
you may need more time to think and decide.
Review this guide in a couple of weeks. In the
meantime, if you can, visit Health Canada's website
at www.gosmokefree.ca and have a look at the
online version of *On the Road to Quitting*. It offers an
interactive tool you can use to create a customized
picture of why you smoke and how you can stop.



Did you know?

- People who put their commitments in writing – and who tell others what they plan to do – tend to be more successful in meeting their goals than those who do not.
- Setting a quit date confirms your commitment. It will focus your preparations on a definite goal.
- A good quit date should give you time to prepare, but not enough to let you get distracted or have second thoughts.

Set a date!

Now that you're ready to quit, you need to make a commitment.

Choose the right time. Think about the activities you have planned for the next few weeks. Choose a time when you won't be too stressed. For example, find a week when you have no major deadlines at work or home. You may want to begin on a weekend so you can plan some activities that will keep your mind off cigarettes. If you're a woman, don't pick a date immediately before your period.

Remember that it is unlikely there will ever be a perfect day to quit smoking.

Instead of continuously putting off your quit date, use unexpected circumstances to your advantage. For example, sometimes having to deliver a big project can help distract you from cravings and urges to smoke. If you're going through a stressful period, remind yourself that smoking actually increases the effects of stress by increasing heart rate and breathing. Over the longer term, quitting will reduce your stress.

Pick your quit date and write it down.

Choose a date no more than three weeks from today. Mark it on every calendar. Look at it every day as a reminder. Each time you do, remember that it's an opportunity. Think about all the reasons you want to quit, and all that you have to gain.

Having a specific action plan can improve your chances of quitting smoking for good.

A good plan should be written down because it requires you to think more carefully about what you need to do and how you will do it. You can find some tips about preparing your own action plan on page 23 of this guide.



Did you know?

- Support from your friends and family members can make a real difference to your success!
- Your friends who smoke will probably understand why you need to avoid being around smoke, at least for a while.
- Many municipalities have quit-smoking support groups. Call your public health office for information.

Plan to get support

Speak to a health professional.

It's always wise to speak to your family doctor when you're planning a major lifestyle change. Your doctor will be able to provide you with advice on nicotine replacement therapies and also refer you to other possible sources of support to stop smoking.

You might consider nicotine replacement therapy or other medications to help you quit.

Nicotine replacements like gum and patches can help you with cravings. You use nicotine gum to control cravings one at a time. Patches keep a controlled amount of nicotine (in gradually reduced amounts) in your system at all times for up to three months. Both are available without a prescription. Bupropion is an anti-depressant pill that has been found to help people with nicotine withdrawal; however, it must be prescribed by your doctor and started at least a week before you quit.

Tell others that you're going to quit.

If you keep it to yourself, it may be easier to change your mind. Telling your family, friends and co-workers gives you another reason to stay focussed, and it will encourage them to help you when you need support. Tell friends who smoke about your decision. They're sure to understand.

Choose a quit buddy.

You might want to talk with someone if you need extra help to resist the urge to smoke. Tell a close non-smoking friend what you plan to do. Explain that you might call upon them for support.

You might also consider calling a toll-free quitline for help and information. When you call, you will speak to a knowledgeable, friendly and supportive specialist, someone who understands what you are going through.

- Newfoundland and Labrador residents: 1-800-363-5864
- New Brunswick and Nova Scotia residents: 1-877-513-5333
- Prince Edward Island residents: 1-888-818-6300
- Quebec residents: 1-866-527-7383
- Ontario residents: 1-877-513-5333
- Manitoba and Saskatchewan residents: 1-877-513-5333
- Alberta residents: 1-866-332-2322
- British Columbia residents: 1-877-455-2233

To access resources call:

- Yukon residents: 1-800-661-0408 (ext. 8393)
- Northwest Territories residents: 1-867-920-8826
- Nunavut residents: 1-866-877-3845

The day before you quit:

- Write down all your reasons for quitting
- Create a smoke-free space to live in by throwing away everything related to smoking
- Plan for difficult situations



Choose the quit method that's right for you

Some people quit suddenly.

This means taking the time to understand where and why you smoke, preparing mentally to break the patterns and deal with withdrawal, then stopping all at once. You may wish to visit Health Canada's *On the Road to Quitting* website at www.gosmokefree.ca for additional help to quit smoking and to complete a questionnaire to help you better understand why you smoke and your level of addiction to nicotine.

Some people prefer to cut back gradually.

This means slowly reducing the amount you normally smoke as you move closer to your quit date. Cutting back allows you to get a sense of what it will be like to quit for good. It gives you the chance to solve a few challenges at a time, instead of all at once.

There are many ways to cut back.

The easiest cigarettes to cut out are the ones you don't need. Each time you reach for a cigarette, stop and think "Do I really need it?" Wait five or ten minutes before acting on your urge to smoke. Smoke less of each cigarette than you normally would. Start to "ration" your cigarettes by carrying only enough to get you through the day and refusing to get more. Every day or two, reduce that amount. Cut down as far as you can. Try delaying your first cigarette of the day by at least two hours and eliminating cigarettes at various other times, such as at afternoon breaks or after dinner.

How do you make decisions?

Think of one or more significant decisions or changes you've made quickly and completely. Then name one or two decisions or changes you've made after thinking, testing and practising for some time. Which ones have been most successful? Why?



Prepare for your quit day by:

- Using your Tracking Card to analyse your triggers and smoking routines
- Making a list of all the things you normally do when you smoke
- Trying to change just one or two of these routines
- Avoiding triggers
- Planning for difficult situations
- Practising how you will work through cravings in the first few days after you quit

Getting ready for your quit day

Start thinking positively.

Instead of saying "I will not," try another approach so that you can say "I will." For example, if you normally smoke after dinner, you could say: "Right after dinner tonight, I will go for a short walk." Remember the encouragement you've already received from those you told about your plan to quit smoking.

Plan to reward yourself.

Each day and week without cigarettes is worth celebrating. Think of a few things you would really like to have or do that you could "earn" by staying smokefree. Consider putting the money you would have spent on cigarettes in a "piggy bank" or jar. Use it to treat yourself in big or small ways.

Over time, the things you normally do while smoking have become "triggers."

Like other reminders, such as the sight or smell of a cigarette or a certain time of the day, they automatically make you want to light up. Breaking those routines can give you the confidence and motivation you need to change more.



Did you know?

- Positive thoughts about the benefits of quitting as you go to bed and as you get up can help “program” you for success during the day.
- Confidence and success are the rewards of good preparation, a positive attitude and a firm commitment.
- Reviewing what you’ve learned will help you feel great about your decision, and reinforce your motivation to follow through.

Create your own action plan

Having a specific action plan can improve your chances of quitting smoking for good.

Here are some specific suggestions on how to develop your plan.

1. Write a clear statement about why you've stopping smoking.

Indicate who else will benefit from your decision to quit. Try to imagine how you'll look. How will you feel about yourself? You may be concerned about your health or want to regain control of your life. You may wish to set a good example for your children or improve your relationship with family and friends. You may also wish to keep more of your hard-earned money!

2. List your concerns about quitting.

Next to each concern, write down one or more things you'll do to overcome this challenge. For example, you may be concerned about failure. Many people try more than once to quit smoking. Each quit attempt is a success, as you'll learn skills that you can apply to your next quit attempt.

3. Prepare for withdrawal.

Take a moment to write down one or two strategies you can use to deal with each withdrawal symptom, in case it happens to you. Being able to recognize withdrawal symptoms will also help you to remember that the effect is only temporary.

4. Acknowledge the skills and knowledge you already have.

Think about the times you've gone without smoking in the past. What did you do to keep yourself from smoking? Which of these strategies seemed to be most helpful? Have you become more physically active, changed your diet, started wearing your seat belt, stopped putting things off? How did you do it? Could these skills help you to change your smoking behaviour?

5. Identify your social support.

Most people underestimate the support they think they'll get from their family and friends. List the people you can count on to help you. Who can you call for encouragement? Who will help distract you when you crave a smoke? Who can help you avoid tempting situations?

6. Identify your smoking patterns and "triggers."

Before you quit, use your Tracking Card to record how much you smoke, where you were when you smoked, who you were with, as well as what you were thinking, feeling and doing immediately before, during and after you smoked. Review the notes after one week to see if you can find any patterns to your smoking. For example, does the amount you smoke change according to who you were with, where you were, what you were doing or how you were feeling?

7. Determine how to change the things that remind you of smoking.

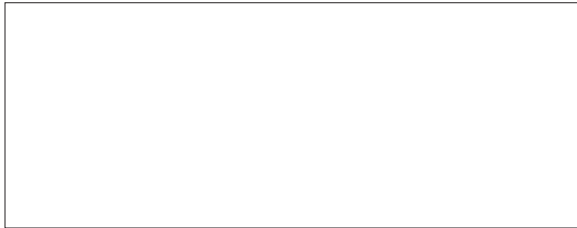
If coffee reminds you of smoking, switch to tea or juice. If you tend to smoke in a certain chair, sit in another chair or go outside. Remove all ashtrays from sight.

8. Set a quit date.

The final step of your quit plan should be to set a date to begin your life without cigarettes. Try to pick a specific date within the next three weeks.

9. Put the date in writing!

I have committed to stop smoking on _____. On that day, and on each day afterwards, I will not smoke. I will do whatever it takes to keep this promise so I can have a new and better life without cigarettes.



Your signature here

Review and prepare

Take some time to review what you've learned.

Remember your smoking “triggers” and when they’re likely to happen. Prepare to face them, and remember what you plan to do instead of smoking.

On the day before you quit...

You may be feeling nervous as your quit day approaches. You may feel that you’re about to give up something important in your life. To help you deal with this feeling, remind yourself that you’re well prepared and that you have what it takes to succeed. Let your family, friends and co-workers know that tomorrow is your quit day. Ask them to understand if you appear tense and irritable. Let them know that you appreciate their support.

Scan your calendar for events or circumstances that you think might tempt you to start smoking.

Are there any periods of high stress? Will you be going out or spending time with a friend or family member who reminds you of smoking? For each tempting situation, think of at least three things you can do to cope, like avoiding the situation or doing something that is incompatible with smoking (e.g. choosing a non-smoking restaurant).

Before you go to bed...

Throw out *all* your cigarettes. Do not keep any for “emergencies.” Throw away your lighters and ashtrays too! Most of all, feel good about having the courage to quit.



Remember...

- Cravings come in waves and rarely last more than a few minutes.
- Avoiding the sight and smell of cigarettes makes it much easier to deal with cravings and resist urges.
- Thinking of yourself as a non-smoker is one of the keys to *becoming* a non-smoker.

Quitting day – your new beginning!

Congratulations!

Today is the first day of your healthier, better, smokefree life. Celebrate it. Be proud of yourself. You have taken the steps to learn and prepare. You're doing the right thing. Now you're ready to enjoy all the benefits of being a non-smoker.

Take it easy.

Quitting could seem stressful over the next few days. Make it easy on yourself. Take some time for yourself. Try to avoid or walk away from situations that give you more stress. Among other things, avoid places where you might see and smell cigarettes.

Do whatever it takes to cope with cravings.

Take control. If you find yourself in a situation that makes you want to smoke, remove yourself from that situation. Shift your attention to something else. Think beyond the cravings and work through them. Remember that every urge will pass and that you will feel stronger after every one.

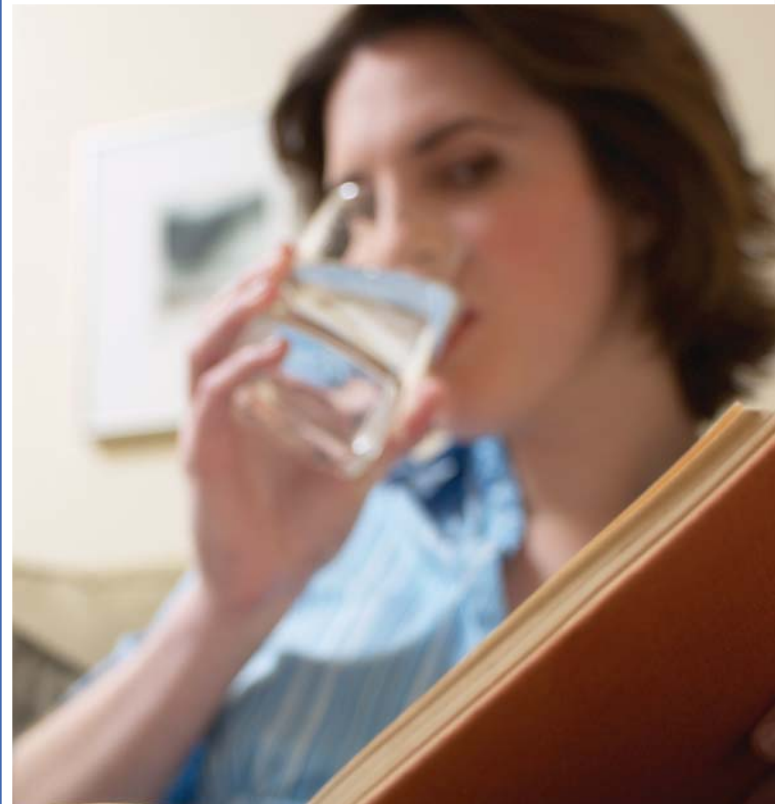
Your cravings may be timed to different events in your day like driving to work, coffee breaks, and meals. Break up patterns in your day that trigger cravings, take a different route to work or school, do something different at coffee break and after a meal.

In the days ahead...

Continue to think positively about the change you've made. Remind yourself that you can do this, and that it takes a bit of time to heal. Each day without cigarettes will make you healthier and stronger.

Remember what's most important and stay focussed on your goal.

- For urges and cravings: distract yourself with other thoughts and activities, breathe deeply, and drink water.
- For thoughts and excuses: recognize that it's the nicotine talking and refuse to listen. Refuse to be fooled.
- For feelings of restlessness or irritability: recognize that these are signs of healing.



Dealing with withdrawal

Smoking has conditioned your body to depend on nicotine.

After you quit, the brain will continue to crave nicotine, and you'll probably experience some symptoms of withdrawal. These include urges to smoke; thoughts about having "just one"; and feeling restless, irritable, frustrated or uncomfortable. You may also have difficulty concentrating, experience coughing, mild depression or have trouble sleeping for a while.

Accept the fact that they're going to happen.

However, urges rarely last more than a few minutes and the other symptoms seldom last for more than 10 days. Think of each one as a bridge you have to cross to reach the reward on the other side. Prepare to think past them, work through them. Remember that they are temporary, while the benefits of quitting will be with you for life. Remind yourself that you've worked hard to prepare and that you will succeed!

Staying quit.

The key to staying quit is to develop new behaviours instead of just trying not to smoke. Right from the start, you'll have to find ways to help yourself feel satisfied without cigarettes. If you work at it, staying smokefree gets easier because you develop the skills and confidence you need.

How long does withdrawal last?

For many people, withdrawal is at its worst for the first few days and then it begins to lessen after three or four days. After a week to ten days, all withdrawal symptoms should be gone. Your main task in quitting is to find a way to get through the first few days. If you do, you have a much better chance of succeeding for good.

Remember...

- Be understanding with yourself during this time. For example, take time off, work at a slower pace, get busy with a new project or whatever works best for you.
- Let people know what you're going through, and ask for their support and understanding. It may help to have someone to talk to about what's happening to you.



Be positive. Stay focussed.

You can and will succeed!

Each day without cigarettes will get easier. Each day without cigarettes will make you stronger. Each day without cigarettes is worth celebrating. So, each and every day for the next month:

- **Remember you are a non-smoker.** You do not smoke. Make this your first and last conscious thought of every day. Remind yourself every time you see someone else with a cigarette.
- **Review your reasons for quitting,** your responses to your concerns, and your strategies for coping with urges and other withdrawal symptoms. Avoid doing any of the things you strongly associate with smoking.
- **Try to go for short walks.** Focus on the pleasure of breathing clean, smokefree air – it's helping to heal your heart and lungs.
- **Be proud of yourself.** Continue to think positively about the change you've made. Don't worry if you feel a little "down" for a few days – that's a sign of nicotine withdrawal. Remind yourself that you can do this, that it takes a bit of time to heal, and that you're getting healthier and stronger every day.
- **Reward yourself.** Every day, indulge yourself with some time, activities or things that are just for you. If you have made a savings jar as one of your rewards, add to it every day and watch those savings grow!

If you need extra help or more information in the days and weeks ahead, visit the Health Canada website at www.gosmokefree.ca, to sign up to receive a free electronic quit message each day for eight weeks; call the 1-800 quitline in your province; or call your family physician or public health office.

Tips for staying quit

- When you quit ask your friends to go to places that do not allow smoking.
- Don't ever test yourself with "just one".
- Remind yourself of the positive things you've experienced since you quit.
- Ask others to remind you of your goal to remain smokefree.
- Live, work and play in a smokefree place.



Learning to live without cigarettes – Dealing with temptations

Stay away from tempting situations.

The best way to cope with temptations is to avoid them. Avoid situations that involve alcohol, people and things that make you want to smoke. The key is to learn to recognize potentially tempting situations, and then prepare two or three strategies you can use if the situation comes up. Do this until not smoking is more natural than smoking.

Change your thinking.

Think about positive things about not smoking. Consciously focus on what is good about quitting smoking. Some people keep the money they've saved in a jar and look at it (a lot). Some people think about how much easier it is to breathe when they play hockey, soccer, go for a brisk walk, or try to keep up with their children.

Think about negative things about cigarettes and smoking. Some people have a picture of what smoking does to the lungs. Others have a butt jar (a jar filled with water and old cigarette butts). Do what works for you.

Distract yourself quickly.

If you're tempted to smoke, try to distract yourself by doing something that requires concentration. For example, play a game of cards, check out the Internet (e.g. Health Canada's www.gosmokefree.ca site), write a letter to a friend, get started on a project or cook dinner. To relieve boredom or irritability, try chewing sugarless gum, listening to relaxing music, taking a shower or bath, or doing some deep breathing and relaxation exercises.

Remind yourself about why you want to quit smoking.

Carry something you can look at or read that reminds you of why quitting is your goal, like a card with your reasons for quitting, a picture of your children or family members who support you, or anything that makes you feel good about not smoking.



Did you know?

- Research shows that a slip is the number one thing that leads back to regular smoking. Even one puff can re-program your brain to demand more nicotine.
- Knowing what triggers you to smoke will help you to deal with temptations. Scan your calendar every day to identify situations that may tempt you to smoke and then prepare for them. If you figure out in advance how you'll deal with difficult situations, you're more likely to stay quit.
- To increase your chances of quitting for good, pay attention to what you say to yourself. If it is negative, silently say "STOP," then replace it with positive thoughts like:
 - "This feeling will pass in a few minutes."
 - "I'm well prepared and I can handle anything that comes my way."
 - "This withdrawal is a sign that my body is healing itself."

Regaining control if you slip

A slip is like a fire alarm. When the alarm rings, you need to know exactly what to do, what to say, where to go and whom to ask for help. You don't want to lose control of a situation. Plan ahead in the same way as you would plan for a fire drill.

Change the situation.

1. Stop smoking immediately.
2. Leave the room or situation.
3. If you bought cigarettes, throw them out.

Talk positively to yourself.

4. Remind yourself how far you've come, not just how far you have to go.
5. Encourage yourself not to give up.

Take action.

6. Do something that makes it impossible to smoke (take a shower).
7. Find a bigger focus than cigarettes or the craving (focus on gardening, work, the news, etc.).
8. Do not criticize yourself.
9. Make your mouth and throat feel differently – chew mint-flavoured gum.
10. Do a physical activity – go for a brisk walk outside. Fresh air clears your head.
11. If you're having a major craving, sit down and breathe deeply until the feeling passes.

Ask for help.

12. Talk to someone to distract or encourage you.

Remember...

If you do slip, don't worry about it. It doesn't mean you have to give up. Just keep on working at it! Try to figure out why it happened and make plans to avoid it in the future.



Remember...

- Incorporate physical activity into your daily life. The more you move, the better you feel.
- Eating well doesn't mean giving up the foods you love; it means choosing wisely from a variety of foods and choosing lower fat foods more often.

Keeping your weight in check!

People gain weight for a lot of reasons.

For example, after you stop smoking, you may be tempted to eat more because your food will smell and taste better. You may eat as a substitute for keeping your hands or mouth busy. You may also gain weight because your metabolism is no longer being sped up by nicotine. Sometimes, people gain weight because they feel hungrier after they quit smoking. Finally, you may gain weight because subconsciously you believe you have a legitimate reason for doing so.

What can you do to reduce the chances of weight gain?

You'll be less likely to gain weight if you don't change your diet, stick to very low-energy snacks and increase exercise or physical activities. Using the nicotine patch or gum or Bupropion as part of your quit attempt may also slow weight gain. Individuals who are more physically active before they stop smoking are also much less likely to gain weight.

What about your eating habits?

Some people are able to make several lifestyle changes at the same time. However, most people find it easier to tackle one challenge at a time. Try to maintain your normal diet. It also helps to drink lots of water and to snack on healthy foods. If you do gain weight, try becoming more physically active.

What about physical activity?

Some people who quit say that taking walks every day helps them keep their weight under control. It also helps with food and nicotine cravings and gets them out of the house so that they do not smoke out of boredom.

Help is just a Phone Call Away!

When you call our toll-free number, you will speak to a knowledgeable, friendly and supportive specialist, someone who understands what you are going through.

- Call the Smokers' Helpline for:
- Free counselling
- Free self-help materials
- Free advice and support
- Access to free community links for support

You might also consider calling a toll-free quitline for help and information:

- Newfoundland and Labrador residents: 1-800-363-5864
- New Brunswick and Nova Scotia residents: 1-877-513-5333
- Prince Edward Island residents: 1-888-818-6300
- Quebec residents: 1-866-527-7383
- Ontario residents: 1-877-513-5333
- Manitoba and Saskatchewan residents: 1-877-513-5333
- Alberta residents: 1-866-332-2322
- British Columbia residents: 1-877-455-2233

To access resources call:

- Yukon residents: 1-800-661-0408 (ext. 8393)
- Northwest Territories residents: 1-867-920-8826
- Nunavut residents: 1-866-877-3845

Help is just a

**phone call
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YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU QUIT SMOKING!

- You'll feel much more in control of your decisions, actions and health.
- You'll gain a sense of pride and accomplishment that will enhance your self-confidence.
- You'll be able to enjoy sports and other physical activities with more strength and endurance.
- You won't have to worry about your health so much.
- You won't have to worry that the mucous or scratchiness in your throat is a sign of serious smoking disease.
- You'll look and feel younger. Smoking causes premature aging and wrinkling of the skin. Quitting will help restore your look of good health.
- You'll never again have to feel guilty or uncomfortable about smoking.
- You'll join the vast majority who have accepted the value and pleasure of living smokefree.

www.gosmokefree.ca