

Tips to Help You Stop Smoking

Stopping smoking is not easy. Do persevere, as you are likely to soon feel a lot better and healthier for giving up. Don't despair if you have tried to stop before. People who keep trying to stop smoking often succeed.

Below are some tips, which may help you to stop smoking.

- **Write a list of all the reasons why you want to stop**, and keep them with you. Refer to them when you are tempted to light up.
- **Set a date for stopping**, and stop completely. (Some people prefer the idea of cutting down gradually. However, research has shown that if you smoke fewer cigarettes than usual, you are likely to smoke more of each cigarette, and nicotine levels remain nearly the same. Therefore, it is usually best to stop once and for all from a set date.)
- **Tell everyone.** Friends and family often give support and may help you.
- **Get rid of ashtrays, lighters, and all cigarettes.**
- **Be prepared for some withdrawal symptoms.** When you stop smoking, you are likely to get symptoms, which may include: nausea (feeling sick), headaches, anxiety, irritability, craving, and just feeling awful. These symptoms are caused by the lack of nicotine that your body has been used to. They tend to peak after 12-24 hours, and then gradually ease over 2-4 weeks.
- **Be aware of situations** in which you are most likely to want to smoke (for example, the pub). Try changing your routine for the first few weeks. If drinking tea and coffee are difficult times, try drinking mainly fruit juice and plenty of water.
- **Take one day at a time.** Mark off each successful day on a calendar. Look at it when you feel tempted to smoke, and tell yourself you don't want to start all over again.
- **Be positive.** You can tell people that you don't smoke. You will smell better. After a few weeks you should feel better, taste your food more, and cough less. You will have more money. Perhaps put away the money you would have spent on cigarettes for treats.
- **Food.** Many people worry about gaining weight when they give up smoking as the appetite may improve. Anticipate an increase in appetite, and try not to increase fatty or sugary foods as snacks. Try sugar-free gum and fruit instead.
- **Don't despair if you fail** and have a cigarette. You don't have to start smoking again. Pick yourself up and try again. Examine the reasons why you felt it was more difficult at that particular time. It will make you stronger next time.
- **Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)** can help if withdrawal symptoms are

troublesome. Nicotine gum, sprays, patches, tablets, lozenges, and inhalers are available. Using one of these roughly doubles your chance of stopping smoking if you really want to stop. A pharmacist, GP, or practice nurse can advise about NRT.

- **A medicine called bupropion (trade name 'Zyban')** is another option. It also roughly doubles your chance of stopping smoking if you really want to stop. It helps reduce the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal. It may be advised by your GP if you are determined to quit, but are finding it difficult.