



Tipsheet: Quitting Smoking

Why Quit?

It makes a difference right away.

- You can taste and smell food better.
- Your breath smells better.
- Your cough goes away. This happens for men and women of all ages, even those who are older. Quitting smoking cuts the risk of lung cancer, many other cancers, heart disease, stroke, other lung diseases, and other respiratory illnesses.
- Ex-smokers have better health than current smokers. Ex-smokers have fewer days of illness, fewer health complaints, and less bronchitis and pneumonia than current smokers.

It saves money.

A pack-a-day smoker who pays \$4 per pack can expect to save more than \$1,400 per year. The price of cigarettes (and taxes on them) will most likely continue to rise.

Getting Ready to Quit

- Set a date for quitting. If possible, have a friend quit smoking with you.
- Notice when and why you smoke. Identify the things that you often do while smoking: drinking your morning cup of coffee or driving a car.
- Change your smoking routines. Keep your cigarettes in a different place. Smoke with your other hand. Don't do anything else when smoking. Think about how you feel when you smoke.
- Smoke only in certain places.
- Wait a few minutes. When you want a cigarette, wait a few minutes. Try to think of something to do instead of smoking—chew gum or drink a glass of water.
- Make it harder to smoke. Buy one pack of cigarettes at a time. Switch to a brand of cigarettes you don't like.

On Your Quit Day

- Get rid of all your cigarettes. Put away your ashtrays.
- Change your morning routine. When you eat breakfast, don't sit in the same place at the kitchen table. Stay busy.
- Do something else. When you get the urge to smoke, do something else instead.
- Carry other things to put in your mouth such as gum, hard candy, or a toothpick.
- Reward yourself at the end of the day for not smoking. See a movie, or go out and enjoy your favorite meal.
- Staying Cigarette-free
- Don't worry if you are sleepier or more short-tempered than usual—these feelings will pass.
- Consider the positive things about quitting, such as how much you like yourself as a non-smoker, health benefits for you and your family, and the example you set for others around you. A positive attitude will help you through the tough times.
- When you feel tense, try to keep busy, think about ways to solve the problem, tell yourself that smoking won't make it any better, and go do something else.
- Eat regular meals—feeling hungry is sometimes mistaken for the desire to smoke.
- Start a money jar with the money you save by not buying cigarettes.
- Let others know that you have quit smoking—most will support you. Many of your smoking friends may want to know how you quit. It's good to talk to others about your quitting.
- If you slip and smoke, don't be discouraged. Many former smokers tried to stop several times before they finally succeeded. Quit again.
- If you need more help, see your doctor. He or she may prescribe nicotine gum or patch to help you break your addiction.

Source: American Cancer Society Midwest Division, Inc. www.cancer.org 1-800-ACS-2345

Resources: [United Way 2-1-1™](http://UnitedWay2-1-1.org) is a free and confidential, 24-hour information/referral line that can connect you to helpful programs and resources in our community. Just dial 2-1-1 or 651-291-0211.