

# HOW TO STOP SMOKING

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

**Why should I quit smoking?** The number one reason to quit smoking is it reduces your risks of dying.

- Cigarettes make your breath smell bad, your teeth yellow and your clothes stink!
- Cigarettes cost a great deal of money.

**How do I quit?** First:

- Get support and encouragement.
  - Learn how to deal with your stress.
  - Consider using medicines. There are nicotine patches, gum, nasal (nose) spray, and a pill.
- Second, set a date to quit and stick to it. Choose a day you can celebrate it every year afterwards.
  - Next, use the following activities to help you get ready to quit and write them on a calendar.
    - Cut down on the number of cigarettes you smoke each day. There are many ways to do it. Smoke only half a cigarette each time. Or, only smoke on even days of the week only.
    - Get a friend to quit with you. Plan how you will give each other support.
    - Switch to a brand of cigarettes you do not like as much.
    - Write down a list of reasons why you want to quit. Review nightly before you go to bed.
  - On the day you quit, throw your cigarettes away. Then:
    - Ask for help from family and friends. At first, it will be rough but the support will help.
    - Make big plans and keep very busy. Celebrate stopping smoking.

## TIPS to staying "QUIT" and coping:

- **Withdrawal symptoms** are the side effects that occur when your body no longer has the drug nicotine in it. Having withdrawal symptoms is actually good. It means your body is getting rid of bad tobacco chemicals. Usually withdrawal only lasts a few days to a couple weeks. Few people have all the following symptoms.
  - Anger or unfriendliness; restlessness and short-tempered.
  - Anxious or edgy. Activities such as taking a walk helps lessen anxiety or edginess.
  - Coughing. Sip warm tea or suck on cough drops or sugarless candy to soothe your throat.
  - Constipation. Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
  - Difficulty focusing your thoughts. Feeling unhappy or depressed.
  - Headaches. Try a shower or warm bath. Learn new ways to relax like deep breathing, relaxing muscles, music, meditation, or biofeedback.
  - Increased hunger and weight gain.
  - Trouble sleeping or tiredness. Try not drinking or sodas with caffeine after 6pm.

- **Dealing with Cravings.** After you've quit, you may have times when you really want to smoke. To help you get through them:
  - **Delay.** Do not act on the urge to smoke. It will pass in a few minutes. Do not give in.
  - **Deep Breathing.** Take deep breaths. Breathe in and out slowly and deeply.
  - **Drink Water.** Drink the water slowly and hold it in your mouth a little while.
  - **Distract.** Take your mind off smoking. Get up and move around.
- **Get support** and do things to help you stay a non-smoker.
  - Avoid old activities that trigger the urge to smoke. Try exercising or walking often.
  - Keep your list of reasons why you want to quit handy. Review it often.
  - Do things with your hands such as knitting, or playing with things like pencils.
  - Keep cigarette substitutes around like carrot or celery sticks, or sugarless gum.
  - Mark your success every day on your calendar. Reward yourself every day and week. Start saving the cash you would have spent on cigarettes. Pick a gift for yourself.
  - When you do smoke, do not give up because you have "blown it." Think of how many hours, days, or weeks you have already gotten through. Start again, and you'll succeed!
- **Learn how to handle stress** and urges to smoke. Avoid things cause you to want to smoke.
  - Arguments or disagreements.
  - Other smokers.
  - Skipping meals.

**Remind.** Remind yourself why you quit smoking. Go back to your reasons for quitting.

**Rehearse.** Rehearse or practice what to do when you feel the urge to smoke.

**Reward.** Each time you win over the urge to smoke, reward yourself. Praise yourself for your willpower and courage.

- **Take one day at a time.** In any way you can, focus on getting through each day without cigarettes. Say, "I will not smoke today."

**Weight Management .** You may gain 3 to 5 pounds after you quit smoking. Not everyone gains weight. The following are some ways you can avoid weight gain.

- Drink water before meals.
- Get up from the table as soon as you have finished your meal.
- If you get hungry between meals eat sugarless sweets, low-calorie snacks and fruits.
- Take a walk or exercise daily to burn calories. It will also help reduce your stress.

**Call the quit line: 1-800-QUIT-NOW**