

MAKE THE DECISION TO QUIT:

Write down three reasons for quitting; set a quit date and tell people about it; think about being smoke-free; purchase cigarettes by the pack only.

UNDERSTAND YOUR REASONS FOR SMOKING:

For three days, keep a record of each cigarette you smoke; include the time, place and activity; this helps identify situations that trigger your desire to smoke; for each situation, identify the underlying reasons for smoking, such as pleasure, an energy boost, to ease discomfort, ease stress, etc.; use "Alternatives to Smoking" for suggestions about handling situations that trigger your desire to smoke.

DECIDE YOUR METHOD FOR QUITTING:

Choose the method of stopping that works best for you; cold turkey, decreasing cigarettes smoked daily, increasing smoke-free time each day.

THE DAY BEFORE QUIT DAY:

Review your reasons for quitting and alternatives to smoking; make sure you have plenty of gum, mints and carrot sticks on hand; throw away all cigarettes, matches, lighters and other paraphernalia; tell yourself "I CAN DO IT!".

QUIT DAY:

Take one minute, one hour and one day at a time. Avoid other smokers; keep busy; avoid alcohol; tell yourself "THIS IS THE BEST THING I'VE EVER DONE FOR MYSELF AND MY FAMILY".

STAYING SMOKE-FREE :

Stop smoking completely; review your reasons for stopping daily, start a hobby or an exercise program; open a savings account with money saved by not smoking; if others want to help and you value their support, offer them suggestions (for instance, they can help you stay physically active); if you have a cigarette, reaffirm your commitment to stop, then continue with your plan.

ALTERNATIVES TO SMOKING

When you want to smoke . . .

WHILE WORKING:

Keep a list of "Reasons for Quitting" above your desk. Start a doodle sheet and whenever the urge hits, add to it's design. Keep sugarless gum, mints, stick cinnamon, celery, carrots and water on hand. Apply peer pressure; tell your colleagues you've quit smoking. Better yet, quit with a friend at work.

UNDER STRESS:

Sit down, close your eyes, take 10 deep breaths and hold the last one while lighting a match. Exhale slowly and blow out the match. Pretend it's a cigarette and crush it out in the ashtray. Then call a friend who knows you've quit smoking and share your feelings. Take pride in your will power. Feel liberated.

AFTER MEALS:

Don't linger at the table; save dessert and beverages for later in the evening. Brush your teeth right after eating to reinforce the fresh taste in your mouth. Or substitute a mint or piece of sugarless gum. Then take a short walk after dinner.

WHILE RELAXING:

Keep your hands busy with a crossword puzzle, knitting, a manicure or a repair job. Take a walk, write letters, try new recipes, garden. Chew gum or eat a low calorie snack. While watching TV, keep prepared vegetables handy as substitutes for cigarettes. Get a family member to join you.

IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS:

Avoid alcohol, coffee and other beverages you associate with smoking. Sip slowly on a glass of ice water with lemon, non-alcoholic punch or spiced drink. Interact with nonsmokers at parties and avoid spending time with smokers. Keep busy by bartending, helping to serve, or cleaning up.

ALTERNATIVES TO SMOKING (Continued)*When you want to smoke . . .***WHEN MAKING A DECISION:**

The instinct to smoke is just a way of procrastinating. Instead, take a few seconds to relax. Count backwards from 10 to zero. Or, close your eyes and visualize a pleasant image, such as ocean waves. Breathe deeply 3 - 4 times. When you open your eyes, focus on your problem. Then get busy.

WHEN ALONE:

Plan short activities that involve your hands. Do household chores (it's a good time to wash windows or rearrange furniture), take a shower, do short exercise routines, write letters to friends telling them you've quit smoking. List small luxuries you've wanted and plan your "rewards".

IN THE CAR:

For long trips, take along low calorie foods like apples, cloves, cinnamon sticks, ginger, carrots and celery. Turn on the radio and sing along, trying to remember the words to the songs. Get out of the car often and stretch, then take a short walk. Take a smoke-free friend along with your quitting partner.

S M O K I N G F A C T S**IT'S AN ADDICTION:**

The National Institute on Drug Abuse identifies nicotine as perhaps the most addictive drug known - and the only drug used willingly all day long. Heavy smokers keep a level of nicotine in their blood to avoid withdrawal pangs. Many smokers are both physically and psychologically addicted to cigarettes.

BASIC FEARS:

Many people get fearful or anxious about changing a basic habit like smoking because it eases stress, anger and frustration and/or wards off food cravings. Smokers fear that without cigarettes, they won't be able to control these emotions / needs.

STRESS:

Stress is associated with smoking in two ways: [1] many smokers use cigarettes as a crutch when stressed, and [2] the physical symptoms and cravings that accompany withdrawal can cause anxiety. Quitting smoking means finding ways to handle stress without relying on cigarettes.

WORRY OF GAINING WEIGHT:

Many people fear gaining weight if they stop smoking. Yet, the Surgeon General reports that 75% of ex-smokers do NOT gain weight. Help avoid weight gain by being physically active and avoiding high calorie foods. If you do gain weight, don't panic. It can be lost. A few pounds is a small price to pay for the health benefits gained by quitting smoking.

TRIED BEFORE:

Smoking is a true physical addiction. Most smokers make many attempts before they're able to stop, because quitting often causes painful physical and emotional withdrawal symptoms. If you've tried and failed, don't give up. An estimated 44 million Americans have quit smoking. You can too.

FOR YOUR HEALTH:

Within 24 hours after quitting smoking, your body begins healing itself. Breathing and exercise capacity improves and energy returns. Your senses of taste and smell sharpen. Your risk of a heart attack drops. After 10 years, your risk of lung disease, heart disease, and smoking related cancer decreases to non-smoker levels.

FOR YOUR FAMILY:

Children of parents who smoke are twice as likely to become smokers. Smoker's children also have a higher rate of bronchitis and other upper respiratory infections. Additionally, exposure to secondhand smoke contributes to lung cancer and heart disease. By quitting smoking, you help protect your family's health.

FOR YOUR BABY:

Refraining from smoking is crucial in prenatal care. Mothers who smoke have an increased risk of miscarriage, premature birth, and delivery of a low birth-weight baby. Health risks also increase for infants exposed to secondhand smoke.