Stop Smoking Guide

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Congratulations on your decision to quit smoking!

There are few things you can do that will improve your health and the health of those around you more than quitting smoking.

Deciding to quit smoking is the first of several steps you must take. The information and resources in this guide will help you reach your goal. You will have the best chance of success if you use the guide as a step-by-step workbook.

Five key steps for quitting:

1. **Get ready.**
2. **Get support and encouragement.**
3. **Learn new skills and behaviors.**
4. **Get medication and use it correctly.**
5. **Be prepared for relapse or difficult situations.**

Whether you're smoking cigarettes or using other types of tobacco, following these steps will put you on a path toward better health. Quitting tobacco use is hard work. This guide will show you how to quit, but success requires your energy, your creativity, and your time. As you begin working toward your goal, keep in mind that half of all people who ever smoked have quit. You can do it, too!

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Getting Ready to Quit

Key Step 1: Get Ready

There are many things you can do ahead of time that will make it easier to quit smoking and increase your chances of remaining a non-smoker. Some are as simple as getting rid of all cigarettes, ashtrays, and other objects that trigger your urges to smoke. Others are more complex, such as learning relaxation techniques to control the physical effects of quitting. However, it is important to first understand why you smoke.

Why Do I Smoke?

If you know the answer to this question, it will be easier to quit smoking because you can find ways to make up for the things you may miss when you quit.

Most people smoke for different reasons at different times. Reasons for smoking include psychological issues, habits, social pressures, and physical dependence on nicotine. The questionnaire that follows will help you determine why you smoke.

The Why Test — Understanding Why You Smoke

Next to the following statements, mark the number that best describes your own experience.

5 = Always
4 = Most of the time
3 = Once in a while
2 = Rarely
1 = Never

___ A. I smoke to keep myself from slowing down.
___ B. Handling a cigarette is part of the enjoyment of smoking it.
___ C. Smoking is pleasant and relaxing.
___ D. I light up a cigarette when I feel angry about something.
___ E. When I'm out of cigarettes, it's near-torture until I can get more.
___ F. I smoke automatically, without even being aware of it.
___ G. I smoke when people around me are smoking.
___ H. I smoke to perk myself up.
___ I. Part of my enjoyment of smoking is preparing to light up.
___ J. I get pleasure from smoking.
___ K. When I feel uncomfortable or upset, I light up a cigarette.
___ L. When I'm not smoking a cigarette, I'm very much aware of the fact.
___ M. I often light up a cigarette while one is still burning in the ashtray.
___ N. I smoke cigarettes with friends when I'm having a good time.
___ O. When I smoke, part of my enjoyment is watching the smoke as I exhale.
___ P. I want a cigarette most often when I am comfortable and relaxed.
___ Q. I smoke when I'm "blue" and want to take my mind off what's bothering me.
___ R. I get a real hunger for a cigarette when I haven't had one in a while.
___ S. I've found a cigarette in my mouth that I'd forgotten was there.
___ T. I always smoke when I'm out with friends at a party, bar, etc.
___ U. I smoke cigarettes to get a lift.

Score Yourself

Step 1: Transfer the numbers from the quiz to the scorecard that follows by matching up the letters. For example, take the number you wrote for question A on the quiz and enter it on line A of the scorecard.

Step 2: Add each set of three scores on the scorecard to get the totals for each different category. For example, to find your score in the "Stimulation" category, add together the scores for questions A, H and U.

The score for each category can range from a low of 3 to a high of 15. A score of 11 or above on any set is high. A high score means that your smoking is probably influenced by that category. A score of 7 or below is low. A low score means that this category is not a primary source of satisfaction to you when you smoke.

The Why Test Scorecard

When you review your score for each of the following categories, pay particular attention to the categories in which you have a high score (11 or above). Think about alternatives to smoking that might work for you.

"It stimulates me." You feel that smoking gives you energy and keeps you going. Think about alternative ways to boost your energy, such as brisk walking or jogging.	_____ A _____ H _____ U _____ "Stimulation" Total
"I want something in my hand." There are a lot of things you can do with your hands without lighting up a cigarette. Try doodling with a pencil or playing with putty or a straw.	_____ B _____ I _____ O _____ "Handling" Total
"It feels good." You get a lot of physical pleasure from smoking. Various forms of exercise or other activities that you enjoy can be effective alternatives.	_____ C _____ J _____ P _____ "Pleasure/Relaxation" Total
"It's a crutch." It can be tough to stop smoking if you find cigarettes comforting in moments of stress, but there are many better ways to deal with stress (see page 11).	_____ D _____ K _____ Q _____ "Crutch/Tension" Total
"I'm hooked." In addition to having a psychological dependency on smoking, you may also be physically addicted to nicotine. It's a hard addiction to break, but it can be done. Talk with your doctor about using medication to control your withdrawal symptoms (see page 13).	_____ E _____ L _____ R _____ "Craving/Addiction" Total
"It's part of my routine." If cigarettes are merely part of your routine, quitting should be relatively easy. One key to success is being aware of every cigarette you smoke. Keeping a smoking diary is a good way to do this (see page 5).	_____ F _____ M _____ S _____ "Habit" Total
"I'm a social smoker." You smoke when people around you are smoking and when you are offered cigarettes. It is important for you to avoid these situations until you are confident about being a nonsmoker. If you cannot avoid a situation in which others are smoking, remind them that you are a nonsmoker.	_____ G _____ N _____ T _____ "Social Smoker" Total

Your Reasons to Quit

It is important to understand your reasons for wanting to quit smoking. The stronger your reasons and the more aware you are of them, the better your chance for success.

People have many different reasons for wanting to quit smoking. A major one is to live longer and live better. Once you quit smoking for good, you will significantly reduce your risk of having a heart attack, stroke, or cancer. You'll also reduce the risk of causing health problems for your family, especially your children, through secondhand smoke.

The following list describes common reasons people give for wanting to quit smoking. Place a check mark next to those that apply to you.

- ☐ I want to reduce my personal health risks.
- ☐ I want to reduce the risks of secondhand smoke to my family.
- ☐ I want to set a nonsmoking example for my children.
- ☐ I want to get rid of nicotine stains and the smell of tobacco.
- ☐ I am embarrassed by my inability to stop smoking.
- ☐ I want to get into better physical shape.
- ☐ Smoking is costing me too much money.
- ☐ Smoking is becoming socially unacceptable. I am feeling pressured by others to stop.
- ☐ I have had a recent health scare.

People with certain health conditions may have special reasons for wanting to quit smoking. The following list describes some of these reasons. Place a check mark next to any that apply to you.

- ☐ Pregnant women — Improve your chances of having a healthy baby.
- ☐ Hospitalized patients — Reduce your health problems and help your body recover.
- ☐ Heart attack patients — Reduce your risk of a second heart attack.
- ☐ Patients with lung, head, or neck cancer — Reduce your chance of developing a second cancer.
- ☐ Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) — Slow down lung damage.

Now take a moment to personalize your reason even more. In your own words, write the single most important reason why you want to quit smoking. Be specific. Don't write "Because of my health" when you really mean "Because I don't want to get cancer like my dad did."

Once you have identified your own reason for wanting to quit, write it on a 3" x 5" index card that you can carry with you wherever you go. When you need a reminder of why you quit smoking, you can easily pull out this card to review your reason and reinforce your decision.

Reduce health risks.

The Cost of Smoking

Economic savings can be an important reason to quit if you look at it carefully. You may be surprised to see how much smoking really costs you. On the chart that follows, find the number of packs you smoke each day. Then check your cost for a year. Ask yourself the question, "What will I do with the money I save by quitting?"

Yearly Economic Savings

Packs per Day	*Average Cost*
1/2	**$ 1,086**
1	**$ 2,172**
1-1/2	**$ 3,258**
2	**$ 4,344**
3	**$ 6,516**

Prices based on national average retail price per pack, including taxes, of $5.95. Source: Campaign For Tobacco-Free Kids

If you quit smoking, you should be able to buy yourself a very nice reward with the money you save. And the amounts listed above don't show your full savings from quitting. They don't include possible savings from lower insurance premiums, fewer visits to the doctor, fewer missed days at work, and lower expenses for cleaning or replacing burned clothes and furniture. What will you do with the money you save? Write your answer here:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Your Smoking Diary

A smoking diary is a valuable tool when you are getting ready to quit smoking because it makes you think more about your smoking habit. It helps you identify situations that trigger your urges to smoke. It warns you of the times and places where you are likely to have difficulty after you quit smoking. It prepares you to better handle problems if they do arise.

Carry your diary with you wherever you go and make an entry every time you smoke a cigarette.

- In the first column, record the time at which you smoke each cigarette.
- In the second column, describe what you are doing at the time.
- In the third column, rate your need for the cigarette from 1 to 3 (1 is a cigarette that you feel you need desperately, 3 is a cigarette that you smoke by habit, without really thinking about it, and 2 is somewhere between).

It is important to record each cigarette in your diary before you smoke it. If you wait until the end of the day to fill out your diary, you will not remember each cigarette and the reasons you had for smoking it.

Date: March 16

Time	Activity	1-3
7:00	Waking up	1
7:25	After breakfast	2
7:45	Driving to work	3
9:45	Morning break	3
1:00	After lunch	1
2:25	Afternoon break	2
5:15	Driving home	3
6:45	After dinner	3
8:15	Drinking with friends	2
11:30	Driving home	

Cigarette needed desperately

Cigarette wanted but not desperately

Cigarette smoked by habit

You may use the sample slips on the next page to keep your own smoking diary. The page contains four slips, each with enough room to record information for about 20 cigarettes.

Photocopy this page as many times as you like. Then cut on the dotted lines and fold each slip in half. The slips are designed to fit into the cellophane wrapper of your cigarette pack. Be sure to record the date at the top of each slip and record each cigarette before you smoke it.

Date:

Time	Activity	1-3

Date:

Time	Activity	1-3

Date:

Time	Activity	1-3

Date:

Time	Activity	1-3

Date:

Time	Activity	1-3

Date:

Time	Activity	1-3

Date:

Time	Activity	1-3

Date:

Time	Activity	1-3

Change Your Environment

Here are some things you can do to create a smoke-free environment:

Physical changes. The first step is to search your home, office, and car for cigarettes, and throw out every one you find. Then you won't be tempted to smoke if you stumble across an old opened pack. Look in every drawer and closet, and don't forget to check the pockets of your clothing. Also, get rid of the items you associate with smoking. Throw out all your ashtrays, lighters, and matches. Just the sight of an ashtray may make you want to smoke. Put up **No Smoking** signs in your home so others won't smoke there.

Social changes. Many social situations trigger an urge to smoke. If people around you are smoking, you can't help but want a cigarette. So, until you feel confident as a nonsmoker, stay away from places where people are likely to be smoking, such as bars. You might even temporarily avoid friends who smoke. If you must be in a group with people who smoke, let them know you are trying to quit and ask them not to smoke around you.

Plan Ahead

It may be possible to avoid some situations that trigger your urge to smoke, but it's not realistic to believe you can stay away from them all. So you need to decide in advance how you will handle these trigger situations to keep them from tripping you up.

Look at the following list of typical triggers. Do many of them ring a bell with you? Check off any situations that might trigger your urge to smoke.

- ☐ Working under pressure
- ☐ Feeling sad or stressed
- ☐ Talking on the telephone
- ☐ Having a drink
- ☐ Watching television
- ☐ Driving a car
- ☐ Finishing a meal
- ☐ Playing cards
- ☐ Drinking coffee
- ☐ Watching someone else smoke

Make Plans to Control Trigger Situations

Your list of triggers and your smoking diary should give you some clues about what situations create the greatest problems for you. Review your diary to identify those smoking triggers. If you have made previous attempts to quit smoking, take time to recall what things worked and what did not.

Use the following list to write down the situations that trigger your urges to smoke and how you plan to control them. Some examples are provided to get you started. Completing this list is one of the most important things you can do to ensure that your effort to quit smoking is a success.

1. Driving
   a. Turn up the radio and sing.
   b.
   c.

2. Parties
   a. Ask a nonsmoking friend to stay with you.
   b.
   c.

3. Workplace
   a. Take a water break.
   b.
   c.

4. _____
   a.
   b.
   c.

5. _____
   a.
   b.
   c.

What are your triggers?

Other Helpful Ideas

- Avoid restaurants/bars where there are smoking sections.
- Ask for nonsmoking hotel rooms when you travel.
- Enjoy entertainment events where smoking is prohibited, such as movies, concerts, and plays.
- Take a careful look at the advertising for the brand of cigarettes you smoke. Identify what images from these ads appeal to you. Tobacco advertising tries to fool you by showing people who smoke as fun, successful, slim, attractive, cool, or healthy. Remind yourself that tobacco advertising is designed to convince you to buy cigarettes and that smoking won't help you become like the people shown in the ads.

What Have You Learned About Yourself?

You've already learned more about why you smoke, and you've identified your own reasons for wanting to quit smoking. Your smoking diary has helped you understand your urges to smoke. You've also discovered how making changes to your environment and planning ahead for trigger situations can increase your chance for success when you quit smoking. Now you're ready to move into Part 2, "Quitting," and take the steps that will help you become a nonsmoker.

Planning ahead can increase your chances for success.

Quitting

This section of the guide will help you set a quit date, get support and encouragement, develop new skills and behaviors, and learn how to use medication correctly.

Make a Commitment to Quit

Research shows that people who make a clean break with smoking are more successful at quitting than those who try to stop by gradually cutting back on the number of cigarettes they smoke each day. If you just try to cut back, you are likely to end up inhaling more deeply and more often to get as much nicotine as before. So, once you reach your quit date, it's very important not to take even a single puff on a cigarette.

Remember that other tobacco products — smokeless tobacco, snus, orbs, strips, sticks, hookah, cigars, and pipes — are not safe alternatives to smoking cigarettes. All are associated with serious health problems, including cancer. A new product, electronic cigarettes, are not approved by the FDA and should not be used.

Your Quit Date

You could quit smoking today, but that wouldn't give you time to prepare. Research shows that proper preparation will improve your chances of staying quit. Most people need at least a week to make all of their preparations, so select a quit date within the next two weeks.

Ideally, your quit date should be free of major stress. Pick a day when you will have the least exposure to the things that trigger your urges to smoke, even if that means waiting a few extra days before you quit smoking. For example, pick a day off from work as your quit date. Then make a firm commitment to quit smoking on that date. Show the seriousness of your commitment by signing the contract below.

QUIT DATE

On _____ (day and month)

at _____ (time), I will completely quit smoking for the following reasons:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____
(your signature)

Make a clean break.

Key Step 2: Get Support and Encouragement

Help From Your Doctor

Your doctor wants to help you develop a plan for quitting that meets your needs. Don't hesitate to ask for that support. Your doctor's help can be especially important if:

- You have tried to quit on your own and been unsuccessful.
- You have had serious problems coping with nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

Help From Family and Friends

Research shows that help from friends and family makes it easier to quit smoking. It's a good idea to enlist this support before you actually quit.

Don't be afraid to talk to others about how you feel. Let people know why you want to quit smoking and how important it is for you to succeed. Tell them what they can do to help you (see the box below for some suggestions). Even your friends who continue to smoke can help by not smoking in your presence and not offering you cigarettes.

If you get the urge for a cigarette, call someone — preferably an ex-smoker or your quitline — to help talk you out of it. Use the space below to write names and phone numbers of people you can call.

Name	Phone Number

Counseling and Quitting Programs

Counseling and support can help you learn how to live life tobacco free. Counseling advice from your doctor will help, but you may also want to join a group quit-smoking program. Studies show that the more counseling you receive, the greater your chance for success.

Local hospitals, health centers, and a variety of health organizations offer quit-smoking programs. Ask your doctor to recommend a program for you. Your local health department may also have information on programs in your area. Additionally, telephone quitlines can be very helpful to people who are trying to quit. You can get free counseling over the phone by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)

How to Help Someone Quit Smoking

- Help your friend or family member avoid situations where he or she will be tempted to smoke.
- Reward successes. Don't emphasize setbacks.
- Encourage healthy alternatives, such as physical activity and a healthy diet, to help the smoker keep his or her mind off cigarettes.
- When temptation strikes, remind the smoker why he or she wanted to quit.
- Emphasize the benefits of quitting, not the consequences of continued smoking.
- Ask the person you're helping what you can do for him or her.
- Remember: Quitting is a very difficult task. Make it easier with your help, patience, and support.

Key Step 3: Learn New Skills and Behaviors

Manage Stress and Emotions

Any time you change your routine you add a little stress to your life. Quitting smoking is no exception. It may be a healthy change in your lifestyle, but it's likely to add some extra pressure to your life. You'll feel that pressure even more if you have a habit of using cigarettes to relax during stressful times. Smoking tricks you into feeling more relaxed in these situations. Your body feels more relaxed when you feed it nicotine because it is dependent on this drug. However, nicotine is actually a stimulant. Rather than relaxing your body, it raises your heart rate, blood pressure and adrenaline level.

Fortunately, there are good ways to manage stress without using nicotine.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is an excellent way to release tension, overcome smoking urges, and relieve withdrawal symptoms. It also improves your physical fitness. If you exercise regularly, you'll look and feel better. This can reinforce your decision to quit.

Physical activity does not have to be strenuous to be helpful. In fact, starting a strenuous exercise program may be inappropriate if you have been a heavy smoker, or have any medical condition for which you are, or should be, receiving medical care. Ask your doctor about the best level of activity for you.

Walking is one of the best exercises you can do. Start walking short distances at a slow pace, and gradually increase your speed and distance. If you have any questions about increasing your physical activity, ask your doctor.

Relaxation Breathing

Whenever you feel yourself getting tense, focus your attention on your breathing. Slow each breath down. As you breathe in through your nose, silently say, "I am." As you breathe out slowly through your mouth, silently say the word "relaxed." You will become more relaxed as you do this.

Change Routines and Distract Yourself

When you first stop smoking, alter your daily routines. Try taking a different route to work or drinking tea instead of coffee. Distract yourself from urges to smoke by talking to a friend or getting busy with a task.

Reward Yourself

Quitting has its own rewards. It enhances your health and improves your ability to enjoy the smells and tastes of food. It can even make you feel better about yourself. But these rewards don't come quickly enough to help when you first quit smoking, so it's important to set up a system of immediate rewards.

Your rewards should be things you enjoy, and they should be easy to obtain. They do not have to be expensive. Some of the rewards should come from the money you save by not smoking, but others should not involve spending money. Plan a small reward for each day you remain tobacco-free, a larger reward at the end of each nonsmoking week, and a special reward for every month of success.

Here are some rewards others have found useful:

- Stay in bed late and read or watch television.
- Buy yourself something practical.
- Buy yourself something frivolous.
- Take yourself out to dinner.
- Invite a friend to a movie.

Rewards for Not Smoking

DAY	REWARD	DAY	REWARD
1		8	
2		9	
3		10	
4		11	
5		12	
6		13	
7		14	

Bonus for Week 1: _____

Bonus for Week 2: _____

Take time now to write your list of rewards for the first two weeks of your quit-smoking program.

Key Step 4: Get Medication and Use it Correctly

Nicotine Dependence

A cigarette contains thousands of chemicals. Nicotine — a very potent, addictive drug — is one of the best known chemicals. Nicotine reaches your brain as fast as six to seven seconds after you inhale a puff of cigarette smoke. Because most smokers are consistently exposed to nicotine, they become physically addicted to it, so they develop withdrawal symptoms when they try to quit.

Nicotine withdrawal symptoms include anxiety, irritability, restlessness and difficulty concentrating. These symptoms occur soon after you stop smoking and typically peak within one to three weeks after you quit. A craving for nicotine may last for months or longer.

Special Cautions

- Keep nicotine replacement products and other medications away from children and pets.
- Talk to your doctor before using these medications if you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant, breastfeeding, under age 18, smoking fewer than 10 cigarettes per day, or if you have a medical condition.

Medications to Help You Quit

Using a nicotine replacement product or other medication approximately doubles your chances of successfully quitting. The following medications have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA):

- Nicotine gum — available without a prescription
- Nicotine inhaler — requires a prescription
- Nicotine lozenge — available without a prescription
- Nicotine nasal spray — requires a prescription
- Nicotine patch — available with and without a prescription
- Bupropion SR (sustained release) — requires a prescription
- Varenicline — requires a prescription

The nicotine gum, inhaler, nasal spray, lozenge and patch are different types of nicotine replacement therapy. These products work by lessening your craving for nicotine and reducing withdrawal symptoms. Your doctor or pharmacist can discuss the advantages and side effects of each different medicine with you. You start using nicotine replacement on your quit date.

Bupropion SR is a medicine that you take as a pill. Bupropion does not contain nicotine, but it helps you resist your urges to smoke and reduces withdrawal symptoms. Your doctor will instruct you to start taking this medicine one to two weeks before you quit smoking.

Varenicline is also a pill. It lessons your cravings and also makes smoking less enjoyable. Your doctor will instruct you to start taking this medicine a week before you quit smoking.

Frequently Asked Questions

Which type of medicine should I use?

Any of these medicines can be helpful once you are ready to quit smoking. Your doctor can help you consider the options and decide which product is likely to give you the best chance of success and is best suited for you.

What strength is right for me?

For a medicine that you get with a prescription, such as varenicline, bupropion, nicotine nasal spray or a nicotine inhaler, your doctor will tell you how much to use and how often to use it. For products that don't require a prescription, you should carefully read and follow the instructions on the package. Most nicotine patch products start at a full strength for a period of time (usually four to six weeks) and then taper to weaker strengths for shorter periods.

What are common side effects of these medicines?

Common side effects of nicotine gum include soreness in the mouth and jaw, hiccups and stomach discomfort. Using a nicotine inhaler can irritate your mouth and throat and cause mild coughing. Nicotine nasal spray can irritate your nasal passages. People who use the nicotine patch can get a rash on their body where the patch is placed. However, such skin rashes are usually mild and easy to treat. The nicotine patch can also cause sleep problems, but these problems will usually go away if you take off the patch when you go to bed.

Common side effects of bupropion are dry mouth and trouble sleeping. You are less likely to have sleep problems if you take bupropion in the morning or early afternoon. If you have a history of an eating disorder, you should talk to your doctor before taking bupropion

Varenicline can also cause sleep problems, as well as nausea. If you have a history of psychiatric problems, you should talk to your doctor before taking varenicline.

What if none of these medicines help me?

Two other prescription medicines, clonidine and nortriptyline, may be used if nicotine replacement therapy, varenicline and bupropion don't work for you. Your doctor will help you determine whether one of these medicines is right for you.

Will my insurance pay for my medication?

Insurance policies vary widely. You'll need to check with yours to see if they offer this prescription benefit. If not, you can also check with healthcare savings accounts, employee wellness programs, your state quitline, or pharmaceutical company patient assistance programs.

Reaching Your Quit Date: Reminders and Tips

Just Before You Quit

- Practice going without cigarettes in places where you spend a lot of time, such as your home, car, or work.
- Throw away all of your cigarettes, matches, lighters and ashtrays.
- Don't think about *never* smoking again. Think of quitting one day at a time.
- Get the medication you plan to use. Ask your doctor or pharmacist any questions you have about using medicine.
- If you are using bupropion or varenicline, start using it one to two weeks before your quit date.
- Review sections of this guide that deal with trigger situations and your plans to handle them.

On the Day You Quit

- If you are using a nicotine replacement product, start using it on your quit date.
- Remind your family and friends that this is your quit date and ask them to help you through the rough spots during the first couple of days and weeks.
- Change your routines.
- Keep very busy to distract yourself from urges to smoke.
- If you feel anxious, irritable or restless, try taking a walk or soaking in a hot bath.
- Drink lots of water and other fluids, but avoid sodas that contain caffeine.
- Schedule an appointment to have your teeth cleaned to get rid of tobacco stains. Resolve to keep your teeth looking good.
- Buy yourself a treat or do something special to celebrate.

Within 12 hours after you have your last cigarette, your body will begin to heal itself. The levels of carbon monoxide and nicotine in your system will decline rapidly, and your body will begin to repair the damage to your heart and lungs caused by cigarette smoke.

Within a few days you will probably begin to notice some remarkable changes in your body. Your senses of smell and taste may improve. You will breathe easier, and your smoker's cough will begin to disappear, although you may notice that you cough more than when you smoked. This is a sign that your body is beginning to repair the damage that was done to your lungs by tobacco smoke. For most people, the coughing goes away quickly. In some, it may take a few months.

You will also be free of the mess, smell, inconvenience, expense and dependence of cigarette smoking.

Right After You Quit

- Develop a clean, fresh, tobacco-free environment around yourself, at work, and at home. Buy yourself flowers. You may be surprised at how much you can enjoy their scent now.
- The first few days after you stop smoking, spend as much free time as possible in public places where smoking isn't allowed, such as libraries, museums, theaters, department stores, and churches.
- Try to avoid drinking alcohol, coffee, and any other beverages that you associate with cigarette smoking.
- If you miss the sensation of having a cigarette in your hand, keep your hands busy with an object, such as a pencil, a paper clip, or a marble, or an activity such as knitting.
- If you miss the sensation of having a cigarette in your mouth, try carrot or celery sticks, toothpicks, or a straw.

Key Step 5. Be Prepared for Relapse or Difficult Situations.

The majority of people who successfully avoid all smoking for six months stay off cigarettes for good. So, now that you have quit, you are entering a critical period. Most relapses occur within the first three months. Rather than growing too comfortable with what you have accomplished, continue to take active steps to maintain your progress. And remember — even a single puff on a cigarette can cause a relapse. Don't risk it! Typically the urge for a cigarette will pass within five minutes.

Tips for Avoiding Relapse

Make your smoking urges the target of your efforts. Your goal is to reduce and, ultimately, eliminate those urges so that you can get on with life without cigarettes. Try as many of the tips below as are appropriate, and add any others that you discover on your own.

Avoid Smoking Urges

- Limit or stop alcohol use.
- Stay away from people who are smoking and places where you will be tempted to smoke.
- Start an exercise program.
- Avoid stressful situations.

Overcome Smoking Urges

- Chew sugarless gum or mints.
- Repeat to yourself, "I will beat this urge."
- Call your support person to share your feelings.
- Take a walk.
- Brush your teeth.
- Eat something nutritious.
- Go to a movie.
- Drink water.

Renew Your Dedication

- Reward yourself for resisting urges to smoke.
- Frequently review your reasons for quitting.
- Remind yourself often how well you are doing.

Plan Ahead for Potential Problems

The greatest causes of relapse or "slipping" are stress, overconfidence and alcohol use in a social setting. The more you plan ahead for these potential problems, the less likely they are to lead you to start smoking again.

Keep in mind that certain situations that only arise occasionally can cause you to feel very strong smoking urges. Good examples of this are New Year's Eve parties, your company's annual meeting, or a visit from relatives. These events can be particularly hard to handle if they catch you by surprise.

You need to plan ahead to avoid being caught off guard. Use the following chart to list your potential problem situations and what you will do to avoid smoking when these events occur.

Potential Problem	Planned Solution
Smoke breaks at work	Take a walk

Mental Traps

The things you say to yourself will affect your ability to maintain your success. If you become overconfident about not smoking, you could become careless. You might even test yourself by trying "just one cigarette." Don't make this mistake. Staying healthy is too important an issue in your life.

Weight Gain

Most people who stop smoking gain some weight — usually less than 10 pounds. It's important to know that any weight you gain is a minor health risk compared to the risks of continuing to smoke.

Physical activity on a regular basis can help. So can eating a healthy diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grain cereals, and pasta, while avoiding foods that are high in fat.

While you are trying to quit, don't try strict dieting to control weight gain. The added stress of a strict diet could undermine your effort to remain a nonsmoker. Rather than focusing on your weight, try to focus on ways to make yourself more healthy by eating nutritious foods.

If you are very concerned about gaining weight, ask your doctor about using nicotine gum or bupropion SR. These medicines have been shown to delay weight gain.

What If I Slip?

What should you do if you "slip" and smoke a few cigarettes? You have two choices: (1) Start smoking again, or (2) Learn from your experience and renew your commitment to quitting. Here are some things you can do to keep yourself from slipping again:

- Admit that you slipped, but don't treat yourself as a failure.
- Immediately identify the trigger that caused you to slip, and prepare a more effective plan for handling this situation the next time it happens.
- Talk positively to yourself — tell yourself that you have learned something from the experience that will make it easier to resist the next time you face this situation.
- Resolve to not slip again.
- Use it as a learning experience. Almost every ex-smoker learned from setbacks.
- Ask your family, friends, and coworkers to support you even more. If you haven't already, consider joining a support group.

If you do relapse and start smoking again, don't think of yourself as a failure. Usually people make two or three tries (or more) before they are able to stop smoking for good. Studies have shown that each time you try to quit, you will be stronger and will know more about what helps you and what causes problems. You'll be better prepared the next time around.

On the First Anniversary of Your Quit Date

Be sure to mark your first anniversary of not smoking by doing something extra special. Take a vacation. Buy yourself a special reward — something you've always wanted. Write down new reasons why you are glad you quit smoking, and renew your commitment to yourself and your health to enjoy a tobacco-free life!

Additional Resources

For more information about quitting, contact the following organizations:

American Academy of Family Physicians
www.familydoctor.org
www.askandact.org

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org

American Lung Association
www.lungusa.org

National Cancer Institute
www.nci.nih.gov

Office on Smoking and Health (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
www.cdc.gov/tobacco

The Department of Health and Human Services
www.smokefree.gov

The National Quitline Number serves as a single access point to the National Network of Tobacco Cessation Quitlines throughout the United States
(800) QUIT NOW or (800) 784-8669

(800) QUIT NOW

ASK AND ACT
A TOBACCO CESSATION PROGRAM