

Choosing to Be Tobacco-Free

More and more people are taking responsibility for their health and the health of others by giving up the use of tobacco. Quitting can be tough, but it is the way of the future. There are many ways to stop and many places that offer support and help with the process.



HEALTH TERMS

nicotine withdrawal
nicotine substitutes

HEALTH CONCEPTS

- There are many successful approaches to stopping smoking.
- The keys to success for a smoker are recognizing the need to quit, making the commitment, and taking the steps to do so.
- For the addicted tobacco user, if one technique does not work, others should be tried, including medical help and short-term nicotine-replacement therapy.



Strategies for Quitting

A person who wants to quit using tobacco should be reminded that he or she will probably go through a period of **nicotine withdrawal**. This is *the process that occurs when nicotine, an addictive drug, is no longer used*. During this period the person may feel nervous or moody or have difficulty sleeping. These symptoms of withdrawal do not last long, however.

There are many techniques for quitting smoking. One involves using a series of filters over several weeks. Each filter reduces the tar and nicotine levels so that withdrawal is gradual. An increasingly popular method is the use of **nicotine substitutes**. These are *manufactured forms of nicotine that deliver small amounts of the drug into the user's system while he or she is trying to give up the tobacco habit*. Nicotine gum is one such substitute which can now be purchased as an

over-the-counter product. Another technique, the nicotine patch, requires a prescription. The patch, placed on the body, gives off decreasing amounts of nicotine.

Many people combine several of these approaches and techniques to become tobacco-free. In 1996, a prescription nicotine nasal spray was approved by the FDA, allowing nicotine to get into the bloodstream faster than gum or patches. Patients using the spray inhale it once or twice an hour, but can use it up to five times an hour. As with other nicotine substitutes, the ultimate goal is gradually to cut doses until no nicotine at all is used.

Benefits of Quitting

The benefits of quitting tobacco are both immediate and long-term. Benefits to physical health can be measured in improved cardiorespiratory endurance. Physical fitness increases as a person is able to breathe easier and has reduced chances of heart disease and stroke. Quitting not only improves a person's health physically, it also affords emotional and social benefits. Former smokers often experience a sense of freedom and a renewed vigor, as though a burden has been lifted. Constant concern over finding a place to light up or over disapproving glances from nonsmokers vanishes. The money saved from kicking an expensive habit can be spent on more healthful forms of recreation.

Building Health Skills

Goal Setting: Quitting Smoking

IF YOU ARE TRYING to give up smoking or other tobacco use, the following tips might help you to reach your goal.



- 1. Begin by deciding once and for all that you want to quit.** Although it seems obvious, many smokers never take this first step.
- 2. Set a target date for quitting.** This date might be associated with a joyous event, such as the smoker's birthday.
- 3. Take intermediate steps to help you reach your goal.** This might take the form of setting checkpoints at which the smoker cuts down on the number of cigarettes.
- 4. Get help meeting your goal.** Many smokers find that quitting with a friend makes the experience easier. Each is there as a daily—and even hourly—source of support for the other.
- 5. Plan a healthy way to reward yourself once you have kicked the habit.**

Making Responsible

Decisions

Fresh-Air Friends

Mike has been carpooling with Ashley for the past three months. Having a ride to school has made Mike's life easier, but there is a problem: Ashley smokes. After riding in her car, he feels tightness in his chest and even coughs. He also



can't stand the way his clothes and hair smell when he gets out of the car. When he opens the window, Ashley complains that the wind messes up her hair. Mike doesn't want to seem ungrateful or lose his ride. He just wants to be "fresh-air friends." What should Mike do?

What Would You Do?

Apply the six steps of the decision-making process to Mike's problem.

1. **State the situation.**
2. **List the options.**
3. **Weigh the possible outcomes.**
4. **Consider your values.**
5. **Make a decision and act.**
6. **Evaluate the decision.**

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stress management For more information on stress and stress management, see Chapter 9, page 224.

▼ **More and more public places are becoming smoke-free.**

ACTIVITY *List those places in your community that you know are smoke-free.*

Tips for Quitting

Although each person might approach quitting tobacco use in his or her own way, certain general tips apply. For example, those thinking about quitting might first observe how much they smoke, when and where they smoke, what triggers the desire for a cigarette, and how those needs might be addressed in other, more healthful ways. They might also begin to think of and even write down the costs of smoking, in dollars spent, health concerns, and negative reactions from family, friends, and others. They might make a list of the reasons they want to quit smoking, post the list around the house, and read it whenever the urge to smoke arises. Sometimes learning **stress management** techniques can help someone through the withdrawal process. Among the basic steps a person should take when quitting tobacco use are:

- Setting a specific date for when the person will quit and sticking to this date.
- Setting short-term goals to reinforce one's decision.
- Deciding which approach or combination of approaches will be used to become tobacco-free.
- Getting one's environment ready for a new smoke-free life.
- Setting up a support system whereby the person is helped through the process and later helped to stay smoke-free.

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

PACIFIC FINANCIAL COMPANIES
PROVIDE A SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT.
PLEASE RESPECT OUR NON SMOKING POLICY
BY REFRAINING FROM SMOKING
WITHIN THIS BUILDING AND
CENTER ATRIUM AREA.

THANK YOU.

Toward a Smoke-Free Society

Increasingly, the American public is working toward becoming smoke-free. As people realize that the decision to smoke can affect not only their own health but also the health of loved ones, the drive to become a smoke-free society increases. Evidence of this can be seen in public places across the country.

Whole towns are now banding together to restrict smoking. Once-lax laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors are being more strictly enforced. Tobacco licenses are being revoked when stores and store chains sell cigarettes to minors. Vending machines are being moved out of unsupervised areas. Many cities are passing laws that restrict smoking in public places, such as restaurants, civic buildings, business offices, and lobbies. Airlines now prohibit smoking on commercial flights. Hotels have whole floors for nonsmokers. Laws are being proposed to ban smoking in all enclosed public spaces. Increasingly, the law is taking into consideration the rights of the nonsmoker.

Smoking is less common in private social settings, too. Meetings of all kinds are now often designated as smoke-free. Even people giving parties no longer put out ash trays, and they ask guests who smoke to do so outside. With continued commitment to health, the remaining bad news about tobacco can be turned into good news about non-use as Americans head into the future. You, too, can do your part in helping to make this society increasingly smoke-free.



Weight Gain: A Common Concern

A common concern of smokers is the risk of weight gain if they quit. Although statistics vary, only approximately one-third of quitters gain weight because they substitute eating for smoking; one-third lose weight because they start a fitness program at the same time; and one-third find that their weight stays the same. If you quit smoking or using other tobacco products:

- Exercise vigorously and regularly.
- Replace the oral stimulation of using tobacco with carrot sticks or other low-calorie snacks.
- Don't pay attention to the scale while you're trying to stop smoking. Even if you gain a few pounds, that's much less health risk than continuing to smoke.