

Become a quitter

Quitting smoking is one of the most important things you will ever do.

- You will live longer and healthier.
- Quitting will lower your chance of a heart attack, stroke or cancer.
- The people you live with, especially your children, will be healthier.
- You will have extra money to spend on things other than cigarettes.

Five Keys for Quitting

GET READY

- Set a quit date.
- Change your environment by getting rid of all cigarettes and ashtrays in your home, car and place of work. Also, don't let people smoke in your home.
- Review your past attempts to quit. Think about what worked and what did not.
- Once you quit, don't smoke – NOT EVEN A PUFF!

GET SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Studies show that you have a better chance of succeeding if you have help, such as:

- Tell your family, friends and co-workers that you are going to quit and want their support. Ask them not to smoke cigarettes around you or leave if someone does.

- Talk to your health care provider for advice.
- Get individual, group or telephone counseling. The more counseling you have, the better your chances are of quitting. Programs are given at local hospitals and health centers. Call your local health unit for information about programs.

LEARN NEW SKILLS AND BEHAVIORS

- Try to distract yourself from urges to smoke. Talk to someone, go for a walk or stay busy.
- When you first try to quit, change your routine. Use a different route to work. Drink tea instead of coffee. Eat breakfast in a different place.
- Do something to reduce your stress. Take a hot bath, exercise or read a book.
- Plan something enjoyable to do every day.
- Drink a lot of water and other fluids.

GET MEDICATION AND USE IT CORRECTLY

Medications can help you stop smoking and lessen the urge to smoke.

- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved five medications to help you quit smoking:
 1. Bupropion SR
 2. Nicotine inhaler
 3. Nicotine nasal spray – available by prescription
 4. Nicotine patch
 5. Nicotine gum – available by prescription and over-the-counter

- Ask your health care provider for advice and carefully read the information on the package.
- If you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant, nursing, under age 18, smoking fewer than 10 cigarettes per day, or have a medical condition, talk to your doctor or other health care provider before taking medications.

BE PREPARED FOR RELAPSE OR DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Most relapses occur within the first three months after quitting. Don't be discouraged. Most people try several times before they finally quit. Here are some situations to watch for:

- **Alcohol.** Avoid drinking alcohol. Drinking lowers your chances of success.
- **Other Smokers.** Being around smoking can make you want to smoke.
- **Weight Gain.** Many smokers will gain weight when they quit, usually less than 10 pounds. Eat a healthy diet and stay active. Don't let weight gain distract you from your main goal – to quit smoking.
- **Bad Mood or Depression.** There are ways to improve your mood without smoking.