



12 STEPS TO Quitting Smoking

- 1 Talk to your doctor** about nicotine replacement therapies and other medicines that can make your plan to quit much more likely to succeed.
- 2 Set a quit date** within 2 weeks of meeting with your doctor. Tell your family, friends, and coworkers your plans and ask for their support. If you can, quit together. If not, ask any other smokers at home or work to not smoke in your presence.
- 3 Remove all tobacco products** from your home, car, and work environment. Identify smoking “triggers” (e.g., when you sit in a specific chair or when driving home from work) and begin breaking the association by avoiding smoking during those times.
- 4 Write down your reasons** for wanting to quit (e.g., better health, family) so you can review them daily when first quitting. You can add to this list as you quit (e.g., you’re less winded when exercising, food tastes better).
- 5 Make a survival kit** to keep near you the first few days. Include things for your mouth (sugarless chewing gum, tooth picks, mints or red-hot candies) and for your hands (pencils, rubber bands, a squeeze ball).
- 6 Make an appointment** to have your teeth cleaned the week you stop.
- 7 A stop smoking class** can be helpful – especially when smoking urges get really strong. Check in with this support regularly.
- 8 On your quit date, STOP!** Even 1 puff will increase urges to smoke and make it more difficult to quit. Since alcohol reduces your resolve to quit, it’s best to avoid drinking. If you think you need to smoke every time you have a cup of coffee, you might want to try a different hot drink (e.g., an herbal tea).
- 9 Eat simply and healthfully** (lots of fruits, vegetables, and water) but avoid dieting while stopping.
- 10 Take lots of walks outside.** If you’re having a craving, a short, brisk walk – 5-15 minutes – can help you resist. Keep busy in the evenings and on weekends doing activities you enjoy. And once you quit smoking, keep exercising. One study found that walking briskly helps you stay smoke-free. In another study, vigorous exercise helped women avoid weight gain typically associated with quitting.
- 11 Reward your progress.** For example, if you remain stopped for a week, buy something new that you would love to have. When you have been smoke-free for 6 months, take a weekend trip to a favorite location. You can pay for it with the money you saved by not buying cigarettes!
- 12** If you slip and smoke, however, **don't give up.** Plan to make the next day smoke-free.

The American Cancer Society offers tips to help smokers become and remain smoke-free: www.cancer.org/Healthy/StayAwayfromTobacco/quitting-smoking-help-for-cravings-and-tough-situations

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2010.

Ussher MH, Taylor A, Faulkner G. Exercise interventions for smoking cessation. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2008, Issue 4.

