

THINKING ABOUT QUITTING TOBACCO YES, YOU CAN!

*The good news is that it is never too late to quit,
no matter how long you have used tobacco.*

What are the benefits of quitting? Within 20 minutes of quitting...

- Blood pressure drops to a level close to that before the last cigarette.
- Temperature of hands and feet increases to normal.
- 8 hours after quitting, carbon monoxide level in blood drops to normal.
- 24 hours after quitting, chance of heart attack decreases.
- 2 weeks to 3 months after quitting, lung function increases by up to 30 percent.
- 1 to 9 months after quitting, coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath decrease.
- 1 year after quitting, risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

How do I kick the habit?

Start by asking yourself some questions.

- Why do you use tobacco? Is it to cope with stress, boredom or loneliness? Is it because you need to do something to keep busy? Is it because the people around you use tobacco? The answers can help figure out what triggers you to use tobacco. Knowing your triggers can help you plan how to deal with those difficult situations.
- What do you enjoy about using tobacco? Knowing the pleasures tobacco gives you helps you make a plan to find those pleasures elsewhere.
- Before you use tobacco, ask yourself, "Do I really want to use this tobacco?" You may be surprised at how many times the answer is no. You are using out of habit. Make a commitment to only use the tobacco products you really want. Cut out those other tobacco products.
- Ask yourself, "What can I do instead of using tobacco?" Begin to postpone using the tobacco by distracting yourself. You may find it easier than you think to skip it all together.

What about withdrawal?

- Symptoms include headaches, anxiety, irritability, difficulty concentrating, cravings, an increased appetite or sleep problems.
- Symptoms peak in one to four days and gradually decrease and become less intense during the next two to four weeks.
- While many people quit "cold turkey", there are several medications that can replace nicotine in your body and help you with the symptoms of withdrawal. The most commonly used products are nicotine patches, nicotine gum, or Zyban.

Nicotine patches

- Can be purchased without a prescription
- Delivers nicotine through your skin.
- Gives you a steady amount of nicotine throughout the day.
- Takes the edge off to help you quit over an 8-12 week period

Nicotine gum

- Use the gum when you feel the urge to smoke.
- Chew the gum, then hold it in the side of the cheek.
- The original flavor has a strong peppery taste. Try the mint or orange.
- The gum takes about five minutes to work and fights the craving.

Nicotine Lozenges

- No prescription needed.
- Let a lozenge dissolve slowly in your mouth.
- You may notice a warm or tingling sensation in your mouth.
- Don't chew or swallow the lozenge.
- Once in a while, move the lozenge from one side of your mouth to the other

Chantix

- Prescription Chantix reduces nicotine craving and withdrawal symptoms.
- It partially blocks nicotine's effects and increases the brain's pleasure chemical, Dopamine.
- Begin Chantix one week before your quit date.
- Take it after eating with a full glass of water.
- Don't take Chantix close to your bedtime.
- Use caution with operating machinery until you know how Chantix affects you.
- Talk to your Doctor or pharmacist about risks and side affects.

Zyban or Wellbutrin

- It is an antidepressant and helps smokers quit.
- If your urge to smoke is rated a "10", Zyban can reduce the urge to a "6."
- Does require a prescription.
- Take it for 7 to 10 days before trying to quit.
- Plan to use it for as long as 4 to 6 months.

Tips to help you quit

- Write down a list of reasons to quit.
- Get rid of all cigarettes and ashtrays in your home, car and workplace.
- Ask your friends, family and co-workers for support. If they smoke, encourage them to quit with you.
- Plan other activities for the times that you normally would smoke. Change your routine. For example, get up from the table after meals instead of having a cigarette.
- Avoid places where people are smoking.
- Do things that require the use of your hands.
- If you miss having something in your mouth, try toothpicks, sugarless gum or candy. Drink lots of water.
- Keep healthy, low-fat snacks on hand, such as carrot sticks, unsalted pretzels or plain popcorn to munch on when you have the urge to smoke.
- Exercise regularly to reduce stress and avoid gaining weight.
- Keep yourself busy.
- Reward yourself often.
- Do not ever think that "just one won't hurt" – it will!!!

Resources

- Talk with your doctor about nicotine replacement products or medications.
- Call 1-800-Quit Now for free counseling on how to stop smoking. Hours are 8am to 3:00 am and information is available in English or Spanish.