

# FitFacts®

## Smoking Cessation

CHANCES ARE YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT SMOKING IS THE NUMBER ONE CAUSE OF PREVENTABLE DEATH WORLDWIDE. YOU KNOW THAT THE 7,000+ CHEMICALS IN CIGARETTE SMOKE ARE SERIOUSLY HARMING YOU AND THOSE AROUND YOU. WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW IS HOW YOU CAN QUIT SMOKING FOR GOOD. HERE ARE SOME BASIC STEPS FOR SUCCESSFULLY BECOMING A NON-SMOKER:

- 1. Recognize the benefits.** Your body begins to experience better health in 20 short minutes after your final cigarette. Your risk for cancer, heart attack, and other conditions will decrease over the months and years that follow. Other benefits include saving money, looking and smelling better, and feeling healthier overall.
- 2. Determine your reason(s) for quitting.** Write these down and display them in areas that you see often—such as the kitchen, car, and bathroom mirror.
- 3. Set your quit date.** This should be a date within the next month. Circle it on the calendar and make a strong, personal commitment that this will be the first day of your SMOKE FREE life. Tell your family and friends about your goal and ask them to be supportive—this is very important!
- 4. Decide how you will quit.** Some smokers prefer to smoke up until their quit date and then stop completely ('cold turkey'), while others will gradually decrease before quitting. Plan to get rid of all cigarettes and ash trays in your home, car, and work.
- 5. Consider using [nicotine replacement therapy \(NRT\)](#) or medications.** Your body is physically addicted to nicotine, so you may choose to include NRT (as a skin patch, lozenge, gum, nasal spray, or inhaler) or oral medications in your quit-plan. Discuss these options with your health care provider.
- 6. Expect withdrawal symptoms and cravings.** These will peak after 2–3 days of quitting and will improve every day that you remain smoke-free. Cope with these temporary annoyances by doing the following:
  - **Use oral substitutes** such as straws, toothpicks, hard candy, sugarless gum, cinnamon sticks, or carrot sticks in place of cigarettes.
  - **Keep your hands busy** with hand exercises, a squishy ball, or a new habit such as woodworking or needle-crafting.
  - **Breathe deeply** and imagine your lungs filling up with clean, healthy air.
  - **Get moving.** When the urge hits, get up and take a walk around the office, up the stairs, or outside.
- 7. Don't get discouraged.** If you have a slip-up, identify what triggered it, learn from it, and move on. It may take several attempts before quitting for good.
- 8. Focus on eating well and being physically active** in order to prevent weight gain, improve mood, and increase your energy level.
- 9. Enroll in a support program.** Telephone support, in-person support groups (such as Nicotine Anonymous), classes at your workplace or in the community, and/or online support programs can all increase your chances of quitting for good. These other resources can also help:
  - The National Quitline @ 1-800-QUIT-NOW
  - "Clearing the Air" [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)
  - Nicotine Anonymous: [www.nicotine-anonymous.org](http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org)
  - QuitNet [www.quitnet.com](http://www.quitnet.com)
- 10. Talk with your doctor.** Your doctor can help you quit smoking once and for all. Ask your doctor for help in getting started. Check out the following resources for more information:



### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[American Council on Exercise](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)