

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TOBACCO ADDICTION

WHY DOES IT SEEM SO HARD TO STOP SMOKING?

Smoking causes changes in your body and in the way you act. The changes in your body are caused by an addiction to nicotine. The changes in the way you act developed over time as you bought cigarettes, lit them and smoked them. These changes have become your smoking habit.

WHAT'S IN CIGARETTES?

Cigarettes contain substances that you would never think about putting in your body. For example, cigarettes contain tar, carbon monoxide and chemicals like DDT, arsenic and formaldehyde. The tobacco in cigarettes also contains nicotine—the drug that makes smoking addictive. Nicotine raises your risk of heart attack and stroke. Tar and carbon monoxide cause serious breathing problems. Tobacco smoke also causes cancer.

HOW CAN I STOP SMOKING?

- ✔ **Pick a stop date.** Choose a date 2 to 4 weeks from today so you can get ready to quit.
- ✔ **Make a list of the reasons why you want to quit.** Keep the list on hand so you can look at it when you have a nicotine craving.
- ✔ **Keep track of where, when and why you smoke.** Make notes for a week to know when and why you crave a cigarette. Plan what you'll do instead of smoking.
- ✔ **Throw away all of your tobacco.** Throw away your ashtrays and lighters--anything that you connect with your smoking habit.
- ✔ **Tell your friends that you're quitting.** Ask them not to pressure you about smoking. Find other things to do with them besides smoking.
- ✔ **When your stop date arrives, STOP.** Plan rewards for yourself for each tobacco-free day, week or month.



WHAT ABOUT NICOTINE REPLACEMENT PRODUCTS OR MEDICINE TO HELP ME STOP SMOKING?

Nicotine replacement products are ways to take in nicotine without smoking. These products come in several forms: gum, patch, nasal spray, inhaler and lozenge. You can buy the nicotine gum, patch and lozenge without a prescription from your doctor. Prescription medicines such as bupropion and varenicline help some people stop smoking. These medicines do not contain nicotine, but help you resist your urges to smoke. Talk to your doctor about which of these products is likely to give you the best chance of success.

HOW DOES SMOKING AFFECT ME RIGHT NOW?

There are several reasons to quit smoking right now, including:

- ⊗ Gives you bad breath
- ⊗ Makes your clothes and hair smell bad
- ⊗ Turns your teeth and fingers yellow
- ⊗ Makes your skin wrinkle
- ⊗ Makes you get tired more quickly when you exercise
- ⊗ Raises your heartbeat and blood pressure
- ⊗ Damages your immune system
- ⊗ Affects your sexual performance
- ⊗ Weakens your tendons and ligaments
- ⊗ Affects the people around you as second-hand smoke is dangerous
- ⊗ Costs you money
- ⊗ Sets a bad example for your children

HOW DOES SMOKING AFFECT ME IN THE LONG-TERM?

Smoking causes many adverse health conditions, including an increased risk of:

- ⊗ Lung cancer and many other types of cancer
- ⊗ Heart disease
- ⊗ Serious breathing problems
- ⊗ Stomach ulcers and acid reflux
- ⊗ Gum disease
- ⊗ Damage to babies of pregnant women who smoke
- ⊗ Smoking can also cost you time lost working or having fun because you're sick

HOW CAN I GET SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT?

Tell your family and friends what kind of help you need. Also, ask your family doctor to help you develop a plan for stopping smoking. He or she can give you information on telephone hotlines, such as 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669), or self-help materials that can be very helpful. Your doctor can also recommend a stop-smoking program at a local hospital or health center.



REFERENCES

All information sourced from FamilyDoctor.org, a resource operated by the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)