



Quitting Smoking

Quitting smoking is the single most important thing a person can do for their health. Although it may be difficult, many smokers quit successfully everyday. Talking to a trained professional, getting support from friends and family, and using cessation medications can increase your chances of quitting for good.

Tips to quit smoking for good:

- Talk to a health care provider about smoking cessation medications to see if one is right of you.
- Make a list of reasons to quit. Review the list when you have an urge to smoke.
- Set a quit day but give yourself some time to prepare; remove all ashtrays, lighters, and cigarettes from your home and car.
- Ask family and friends to not smoke around you.
- Avoid personal smoking triggers by altering your routine or changing behaviors that stimulate tobacco cravings.
- Set goals; reward yourself each time you reach a milestone.
- Don't be discouraged if you have a cigarette. Examine what went wrong and use that opportunity as a learning lesson.

Benefits of quitting smoking:

Quitting smoking reaps short- and long-term benefits for people of all ages:

- Blood pressure and pulse rate return to normal as soon as 20 minutes after quitting.
- Outward appearance improves; skin will look better and be less likely to wrinkle prematurely.
- Food tastes better, and your sense of smell may improve.

- Coughing and shortness of breath decreases; you may have more energy.
- Risk of heart attack, stroke, chronic lung disease and many cancers decreases.
- One year after quitting, the risk of acquiring coronary heart disease is cut in half.

Youth and Quitting

Ninety percent of adults who smoke started before the age of 18. Each day, roughly 3,600 people between age 12 and 17 will try smoking for the first time; many will carry this behavior into adulthood. Helping youth who smoke quit before this behavior is cemented and before nicotine addiction is intensified can stave off years of negative health and financial consequences.

Because many smoking cessation medications (NRT, bupropion, varenicline) are not approved for use by patients aged 17 years and younger, other modalities are needed to help addicted teens quit.

Programs that offer school-based, multiple-session, smoking-cessation counseling or an intervention involving a physician or pharmacist are useful tools to help youth quit smoking.