

Quit
SMOKING

Quit for Life

True freedom is a state of mind. We all know people who quit smoking years ago and still miss cigarettes. This is a scary concept for any smoker trying to quit, but you needn't worry. The key to breaking the ties to smoking once and for all lies in changing your relationship with smoking.

You have been doing this successfully for a month now- congratulations! You have begun to develop new ways of thinking and new habits which will keep you smoke free in the coming months and years. Let's highlight the key points on which you'll want to focus now and in the future:

Plan for situations that make you want to smoke

There are certain stressors and environments that can trigger a smoking craving. For example, being at a party and drinking alcohol makes many smokers want a cigarette.

- Before you go ask a friend to keep you accountable and smoke free.
- Consciously challenge the craving if it hits- recall your list of reasons why you quit.
- If you live with someone who smokes and is not quitting at this time, make a plan so you're not tempted when they light up.
- Ask others not to smoke in front of you, at least during the toughest parts of your quit.

Your schedule may have had built-in smoke breaks, and cravings can hit especially hard at those times. Know when these times are and what your triggers are, then make a plan to avoid them.

Understand your triggers

Certain people, places, things, and situations can trigger an urge to smoke, even years after quitting. They can affect you no matter how long it's been since you've quit. Knowing your triggers can help you be prepared and fight off cravings.

Beat cravings

It is difficult to stay smoke free when cravings hit. But the longer you go without smoking, the more these urges will fade. Keep your list of strategies to beat your cravings handy.

Give it time

Most smokers who return to smoking do so within the first three months. Even after several months or years, you may still have occasional cravings for a cigarette. This is normal. These urges will occur less often over time and they'll eventually stop completely.

Slip-ups are OK, but don't get stuck there

Nobody is perfect and your path to quitting might not be either. If you've had a small lapse you haven't failed as long as you take action to prevent it happening again.

- Remind yourself of all the good reasons why you decided to quit.
- If you do start smoking again, don't think of that as a failure. You are still learning to quit. Figure out what led to your relapse and plan on what to do differently next time.
- Keep Trying. Every smoker can quit. It may take some time or a few practice quits, but you have the power to break this addiction. Keep trying until you find the right combination of techniques for you and you will be able to quit smoking for good.

Enjoy the benefits of being smoke free

- Better vision
- Clean mouth
- Healthier skin
- Decreased heart risks
- Stop lung damage
- Lower cancer risk
- Smaller belly
- Stronger immune system
- Stronger bones

Be positive

Quitting is a process: take it one day at a time. Keeping a positive outlook can help you get through. There are ways to deal with stress and other strong emotions without cigarettes.

Celebrate you

Staying smoke free is a big accomplishment. Treat yourself regularly. Now that you're not buying cigarettes, you might have extra money to buy yourself something special. But your rewards don't have to cost anything. Enjoy an outdoor hike now that you can breathe easier. Or invite a friend over for a movie night. Remind yourself of the rewards you chose when you developed your quit plan. And congratulations!!