Smoking Cessation

Information for You, a Friend, or Family Member
Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease and premature death in America.

As a smoker, giving up tobacco is the most important thing you can do for your health or the wellbeing of your family.

Congratulations! You have made the first and most important step to beginning your life as a nonsmoker. You understand that you need to quit smoking, and the following information can be used to help you through the next steps in beginning your life “smoke-free.”

Quick Facts About Tobacco
An estimated 433,000 Americans die each year from diseases caused by smoking. That’s more than alcohol, illegal drug use, homicide, suicide, car accidents, and AIDS deaths combined.

Secondhand smoke causes lung cancer in nonsmokers and breathing problems or ear infections in children. Secondhand smoke is responsible for nearly 50,000 deaths in the United States every year.

Cost of Smoking
If you smoke a pack a day (at $5.00+ per pack), you are spending more than $1,825 a year!

Talk with Your Doctor
Talk with your doctor, health care provider, or pharmacist if you have questions or want to discuss alternatives to help you quit smoking.

If you are considering use of nicotine replacement therapy to reduce withdrawal symptoms as you quit smoking, ask your doctor first if it is a safe option for you.

Reasons to Quit
The body is so forgiving that:

- 20 minutes after quitting, heart rate and blood pressure drop
- 12 hours after quitting, the carbon monoxide level in blood drops to normal
- 2 weeks to 3 months after quitting, circulation improves and lung function increases
- 1 to 9 months after quitting, coughing and shortness of breath decrease
- 1 year after quitting, excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker
- 5 years after quitting, risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder are cut in half; cervical cancer risk falls to that of a nonsmoker; stroke risk can fall to that of a nonsmoker after 2–5 years
- 10 years after quitting, risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a continued smoker, and risk of larynx and pancreas cancers decrease
- 15 years after quitting, risk of coronary heart disease is that of a nonsmoker

Quitting smoking also lowers the risk of diabetes, lets blood vessels work better, and helps the heart and lungs. Quitting while you are younger will reduce your health risks more, but quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost by continuing to smoke.

Source: The American Cancer Society

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Why Should You Stop Smoking?
Check those that apply to you.
- Improve my personal appearance by eliminating such things as stained teeth and fingers, bad breath, coughing, and smoking odor on clothes. Prevent wrinkles and keep my skin nice.
- Regain my sense of taste and smell, feel more energized and active, sleep better, and eliminate "hairy tongue" and "smokers cough" or wheezing.
- Regain control of my behavior, gaining a sense of freedom and owning myself again.
- Reduce health risks, such as the risk of heart disease, cancer, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis. I do not want a heart attack or to have problems breathing.
- Reduce risk to unborn children and provide a healthy environment for children and others living with me.
- Save money.
- Increase productivity by regaining the time I now spend maintaining my smoking habit.
- Avoid possible injury or upset to others by such things as dropping ashes on them.

Other reasons:

Tips for Quitting
Quitting smoking can be a difficult but very rewarding decision for you and your friends or family. To help you begin living your life smoke-free, review the following tips for success.

1. Think about your reasons for quitting. Write them down and carry them with you. You can read them every day or when the going gets tough.

2. Choose a good time to quit and set a quit date. Stick with it. Sign a contract. Announce it to family and friends who support your decision.

3. Think about when and why you use tobacco. Do you use tobacco for a pick-me-up? When you are bored? When you are angry, upset, worried? When you are driving your car? When you are with others who are using tobacco?

   A couple of weeks before your quit date, wrap your cigarette pack with paper, pencil, and rubber band. When you smoke, write down the time of day, how you feel, and how important that cigarette is to you. This can help you identify your reasons for smoking.

4. Have a plan before you quit. If you use tobacco for a pick-me-up, plan to exercise or take a walk instead. When you’re bored, plan to call a friend, listen to music, go for a walk, play with your pet—just keep busy! When you’re upset, angry, or worried, call a friend, write it down, or talk to someone you trust.

5. Think good thoughts. "I will do this." “I’m worth it.” “I’m in control.” “I’m proud of myself.”

6. What if you smoke after quitting? This does not mean you’re a smoker again. Do something now to get back on track. Don’t punish yourself; think about why you smoked and decide what to do the next time it comes up. You’re still a nonsmoker.