

The QUIT Guide  
To Stopping Smoking  
And Mental Health

# SO YOU WANT A SMOKE-FREE LIFE?





# WHY QUIT?

Quitting smoking is the single most important thing you can do to improve your physical and mental health.

You'll feel better and have more energy.

You'll look better as smoking damages skin and speeds up wrinkles.

You'll smell better, no more stale smoke on your breath and clothes.

You'll have fresher breath and whiter teeth.

You'll save money. If you are a 20-a-day smoker you save around £2,000 a year on cigarettes by quitting.

People with mental health problems are twice as likely to smoke as the general population <sup>(1)</sup> and are often heavy smokers. This Guide has been produced to give you helpful advice on how to quit successfully.

Thousands of people like you have succeeded in quitting.

**You can do it!**

# TALK TO AN EXPERT

If you take major tranquilisers (also known as antipsychotic medicines or neuroleptics) and want to stop smoking it is VERY important that you talk to your GP and/or psychiatrist before going ahead.

Because of the effects of tobacco on medication people who stop smoking may need a different dose.<sup>(2)</sup>

Smoking tends to speed up metabolism of various other drugs (including caffeine) so often when people quit smoking they need lower doses of drugs.

If you'd like to discuss how you feel about quitting, ring a QUIT counsellor who has been trained in stopping smoking and mental health – 0800 00 22 00. You can talk in confidence seven days a week from 9am – 9pm.

**“I feel so much healthier not smoking.”**



# DANGER IN EVERY PUFF

With every cigarette you subject your body to, there are 4,000 chemicals in the smoke, of which at least 400 are poisonous and more than 50 are cancer-causing.

They include:

**Tar**, a black and sticky residue which clogs up the lungs and causes lung cancer.

**Carbon monoxide**, also found in car exhaust smoke, which robs your muscles, brain and body tissue of oxygen, making your heart work harder. This can cause heart attacks or stroke. Over time, your airways swell up and let less air into your lungs, this is one of the reasons smokers suffer from shortness of breath and lack of stamina.

Among the other killer poisons in cigarette smoke are formaldehyde, also used to preserve corpses; sulphuric acid, also used in car batteries; arsenic, found in rat poison; and acetone, another name for nail polish remover.

**“Just hearing about the chemicals in cigarette smoke made me want to quit. Who would be willing to put all those in their body?”**



# HEALTH AND WELLBEING

## PHYSICAL HEALTH

People with mental health problems who smoke a lot are at a higher risk of many physical illnesses including heart disease, diabetes, and respiratory (breathing) difficulties.<sup>(3)</sup> Plus there is a higher risk of dying prematurely. But don't panic - with the right support you can quit.

## MENTAL HEALTH

Nicotine stimulates the brain to release dopamine which is associated with pleasurable feelings. In the short term nicotine can lift your mood.

In the long term smokers need increasing levels of nicotine to feel 'alright' and as the nicotine in their blood drops they crave a cigarette. This craving makes the smoker feel anxious. The relief felt when this craving is finally satisfied is the feeling that smokers commonly mistake as 'relaxing'.<sup>(4)</sup> And remember smoking is an addiction and stopping an addiction actually lifts your mood and makes you less anxious.<sup>(4)</sup>

You will also feel calmer and probably less agitated because when you stop smoking your heart rate will go down.



# VITAL PREPARATION

Whether you are thinking about stopping smoking or have already started your quit attempt, the following will greatly increase your chances of success. You need to write down the cigarettes you smoke in a day or the key times in a day when you are tempted to smoke. It doesn't matter if you use a spare piece of paper, use a diary, buy a notebook or set up a system on a computer. The vital thing is that you write down key cigarette moments in your day.

If you work on an hour by hour basis then fill in a time line accordingly. Or you can write in key stress times in your day. Maybe it's snack and meal times, or perhaps it's when you socialise? Don't be put off, speak to a QUIT counsellor on 0800 00 22 00 who will help you prepare a system to suit your needs.

**Day 1** write down when you smoke or when you are tempted to smoke. **Day 2** write down the cigarettes you feel you can do without. **Day 3** is for the hard to resist cigarettes. By **Day 4** with the help of a counsellor you can work out when you need support to help to resist another cigarette.

Here's an example of what your preparation details could look like -

Time	Event	How am I dealing with it?	Did it Work?	What will I do next time?
9.00am	Breakfast need a cigarette.	Smoked	No	Ring Quitline for help 0800 00 22 00
11.00am	Mid morning cup of tea	Normally have a cigarette but called the Quitline instead	Yes	Read through the Guide next time.

Remember there's no right or wrong way to do this. It's just important to keep a record of your smoking habits so that you can bin them for good!

# GET SUPPORT

It is important that you really want to stop smoking but willpower alone is often not enough. Only 3% of smokers succeed by willpower alone.<sup>(5)</sup>

Most people need support to help them quit.

You'll increase your odds of successfully stopping smoking by up to four times if you get the right support. Research has proved that telephone counselling is an effective way to quit.<sup>(5)</sup>

You'll improve your odds of stopping by using a clinically proven treatment combined with getting vital support from a health professional or counsellor. There is a wide choice of treatments including nicotine replacement therapy, Zyban and Champix. Get additional support by going along to a stop smoking group, ringing Quitline or email counselling.

QUIT is an independent charity which has helped over two million smokers. The QUIT Guide To Stopping Smoking and Mental Health gives you a step-by-step guide on how to quit for good. QUIT counsellors can offer you friendly help and advice throughout your quitting process.

Smoking is addictive and it can be difficult to quit but with the right support YOU CAN DO IT!

To discuss any concerns ring the Quitline 0800 00 22 00.

**"Instead of picking up a cigarette I'd pick up the phone. I knew I could then manage hour by hour."**



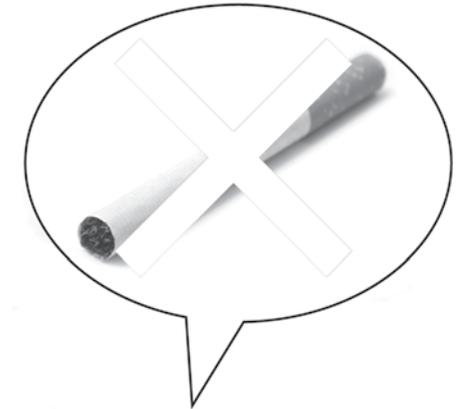
# THERE'S LOTS OF CHOICE

## SPECIALIST CLINICS AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Talking therapies have been shown to be particularly helpful for people with mental health problems who are trying to quit smoking.<sup>(6)</sup>

You may be able to access stop smoking programmes alongside other individual or group therapy sessions at hospital. Many, but not all, addiction counsellors and therapists have experience helping smokers quit.

Your GP may provide stop smoking services or will be able to refer you to a local stop smoking group. Many pharmacists are also trained in helping people to quit smoking. Or ring a QUIT counsellor for your nearest group on 0800 00 22 00.



# TRY NRT?

Nicotine replacement therapies (NRT) such as patches, gums, lozenges, inhalators and nasal sprays have helped many people quit smoking. They help to tackle your toughest cravings by providing nicotine to the body.

NRT products still contain nicotine, but they deliver smaller amounts than cigarettes and without the other harmful substances in tobacco, such as tar and carbon monoxide. NRT isn't meant to replace smoking, but to slowly wean you off nicotine.

NRT is available on prescription on the NHS. This means if you qualify for free prescriptions, you can get NRT for free on the NHS. It has been proven to double a smoker's odds of quitting successfully.<sup>(7)</sup>

Check with your GP or psychiatrist before using NRT.

As with all medicines, nicotine products may cause side effects. Common side effects with all products are: headache, nausea and dizziness. In addition,

patches can cause skin rashes and irritation and the nasal spray can cause sneezing, sore throat and runny nose and eyes. Nicotine from lozenges, gums and inhalators may irritate the mouth and throat and cause dryness. Not all smokers get these symptoms and for those who do it is not usually a major problem.

## CUT DOWN THEN STOP

If you feel you can't stop abruptly then you can use some forms of NRT to help you cut down the number of cigarettes then stop. You need to cut out at least half of your cigarettes with the help of NRT then after a while you can stop completely. Call the Quitline on 0800 00 22 00 or ask your GP or pharmacist for advice on this method.

Full details of the different products can be found in So You Want to QUIT? Ring 0800 00 22 00 for a free copy of this guide.



# OTHER WAYS TO HELP YOU QUIT

**Champix** is a prescription-only tablet, varenicline tartrate, which helps smokers to quit by reducing cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Your GP will be able to advise if Champix is suitable for you and provide monitoring and support.

**Zyban** is a prescription-only anti-depressant drug, bupropion hydrochloride, taken by mouth, which has helped many smokers to quit. It has been shown to reduce physical withdrawal symptoms associated with nicotine. However it is not suitable for all people with mental health problems who are taking medication because of possible drug interactions. People with a history of blackouts, fits, head injury or brain tumour should also not take Zyban because of a slight risk of seizures. Your GP will be able to advise if Zyban is suitable for you.

**“It was very helpful seeing my doctor and talking through what was the most suitable treatment for me.”**

# WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Cravings and withdrawal symptoms are very common when you quit smoking.

Some withdrawal symptoms will come and go over a period of a few days. Most are gone within three weeks and not every smoker is affected to the same degree.

Craving a smoke tends to be the most troublesome withdrawal symptom especially during the first week.

**Remember cravings increase in intensity for up to 3 minutes and then subside.**

You may also suffer headaches, indigestion, constipation and sore throats but these rarely last more than four days.

Some people have bad moods, restlessness, difficulty concentrating, sleep disruption and depression. But they don't last long.

**“The cravings were a pain but they only lasted a little while and they are better than dying from something like lung cancer or a heart attack.”**



# ONE HOUR AT A TIME

Be positive. Think of not smoking for the next hour rather than a whole cigarette-free day stretching ahead of you.

Write down every time you want a cigarette and note the trigger, such as when you have a cup of tea or watch television. Read the list each night and find ways to avoid the triggers.

If you normally light up as soon as you wake keep a glass of water beside the bed and drink that. Remember your craving will only last for three minutes and will become less frequent.

Every time you want a cigarette use a deep breathing technique. Inhale the deepest lung-full of air you can, and then, very slowly, exhale. Purse your lips so that the air must come out slowly. As you exhale, close your eyes, and let your chin gradually sink over onto your chest. Visualize all the tension leaving your body, slowly draining out of your fingers and toes, just flowing on out. Do this three times.

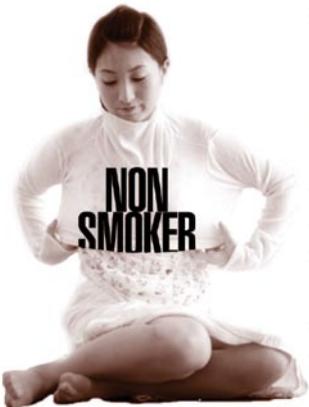
Stretch out your meals; eat slowly and wait a bit between bites.

After meals instead of a cigarette have a cup of herbal tea.

Keep yourself busy. Set yourself chores such as cleaning out a cupboard, sorting out a drawer, clearing out the garden shed, to keep your mind and body occupied.

Go out for regular walks, to a local park or just round the block.

Several times a day, quietly repeat to yourself "I am a non-smoker." Many quitters see themselves as smokers who are just not smoking for the moment. They have a self image of a smoker who still wants a cigarette. Silently telling yourself "I am a non-smoker" will help you change your view of yourself.



# BE MORE ACTIVE

Research shows that doing exercise while stopping smoking can increase your chance of being successful. Exercise will help your body cope with withdrawal symptoms and boost your self-confidence and well-being.

It is also a great way to beat cravings to smoke. If you're having a bad day, go out for a walk. It will clear your mind and improve your attitude.

Everyone can do something to increase their activity levels. It doesn't have to be a 'work-out'.

Build up your exercise step by step. It is better to do a little exercise regularly than to overdo it and give up.

Walking is excellent exercise and it is free.

Walk up the stairs instead of using the lift or escalator.

Walk to the next bus stop or get off one stop early.

Be more vigorous when doing housework or gardening.

Buy a skipping rope or, if you have children, join in their energetic games.

Go swimming. Many local authority pools are inexpensive and you could use the money you are saving from not smoking.

QUIT with fitness experts have designed an exercise programme specifically for smokers to help you with your quit attempt. Keep QUIT focuses on the areas most likely to be affected by smoking: lung capacity and cardiovascular health. To download a level to suit you visit [www.quit.org.uk/programme.htm](http://www.quit.org.uk/programme.htm) or ring 0800 00 22 00.



# WATCH YOUR DIET

If you feel you need to lose weight it is best to cope with stopping smoking first. If you try to do both at once you are more likely to fail.

Increased appetite is one of the withdrawal symptoms you may experience when you quit.

Make sure you don't replace cigarettes with chocolate or other fattening food.

Don't forget that alcohol is high in sugar.

Eat a healthy balanced diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables and fish.

Snack on raw vegetables or sugar-free chewing gum.

The QUIT Guide to Feeling Healthy While Stopping Smoking gives tips on diet and exercise. It also has a free body mass index disc so you can check if you are a healthy weight. Ring 0800 00 22 00 and ask for a copy to be sent to you.

# FEEL THE BENEFITS

## STOP SMOKING AND AFTER:

- 20 minutes** Your blood pressure and pulse rate should return to normal.
- 8 hours** Oxygen levels in your blood should return to normal.
- 24 hours** Carbon monoxide has been eliminated from your body. Your lungs start to clear out mucus and other smoking debris.
- 48 hours** There is no nicotine left in your body. Your ability to taste and smell may be greatly improved.
- 72 hours** Breathing becomes easier. Your bronchial tubes begin to relax and your energy levels increase.
- 2-12 weeks** Circulation improves throughout the body.
- 3-9 months** Coughs, wheezing and breathing problems get better as your lung function is increased by up to 10%.
- 1 year** Risk of a heart attack drops to half that of a smoker.
- 10 years** Risk of lung cancer falls to half that of a smoker.
- 15 years** Risk of a heart attack falls to the same as someone who has never smoked.



**Q: Is it true that I will put on weight when I quit smoking?**

A: Not necessarily. You may find you want to eat more when you first give up smoking but this urge should settle down after a few weeks. Some people replace cigarettes with snacks. If you do this make sure you have lots of healthy snacks at hand such as fruit or carrots or celery. It may help to chew gum. Make sure you stick to a healthy diet and do some exercise.

**Q: Are medications containing nicotine like a patch or gum, harmful and addictive?**

A: It is the tar, carbon monoxide and 4,000 other toxins in cigarette smoke, not nicotine, that are harmful. Although the quantity of nicotine in cigarettes makes it addictive, much smaller, slower doses are used in NRT.



**Q: Does smoking reduce stress?**

A: No. It is a temporary feeling and the effects soon wear off. Then you get withdrawal symptoms which make you feel tense.

**Q: Is it true that people with depressive and anxiety symptoms find it more difficult to stop smoking?**

A: It has been shown that some of these people have greater difficulty stopping and may experience more severe withdrawal symptoms. But many people say quitting smoking can, in the long term, reduce these symptoms and improve their mental outlook, so it's worth persevering.

**Q: Once I have quit how can I make sure that I stay a non-smoker?**

A: If you are tempted think about why you quit and how much better you look and feel now. Think about the amount of money you are saving by not buying cigarettes. If you have just one cigarette the chances are you will be smoking as much as you used to before long.

**Q: I've tried to quit many times and find stopping in one go overwhelming. Can I get support to gradually stop?**

A: Yes. To cut down and then stop is a gradual process so it's important to do it with support. Both NRT gum and inhalator have been clinically proven to work using this method. There are 4 key steps leading to a final goal of stopping smoking within 6-9 months. Ring Quitline on 0800 00 22 00 to discuss the best support plan for you.

# TIPS

- Talk to your therapist, psychiatrist or GP before you attempt to quit smoking.
- Reward yourself. Give yourself a pat on the back for every day you don't smoke.
- Save the money you would have spent on cigarettes and buy yourself a treat every month.
- Don't substitute food for cigarettes.
- Tell friends you have stopped smoking so they can offer support.
- Ask friends and colleagues not to smoke in your presence.
- Change your routine – avoid places where smoking was your routine or where you will be surrounded by smokers.
- Remember, most people don't smoke. Try to be near non-smokers if you must be somewhere you'll be tempted to smoke.



- Throw away everything you associate with smoking such as ashtrays and lighters, and, of course, cigarettes.
- Encourage a friend or acquaintance to quit at the same time so that you can support each other.
- Go to places where you are not allowed to smoke such as an indoor shopping centre.
- Keep your hands busy. People often miss the act of smoking, try fiddling with a pencil, an elastic band or a coin.
- Write down ten good things about being a non-smoker, and then write out ten bad things about smoking. Look at the list every time you are tempted to light up.

**“I have a “lucky” coin in my pocket which I fiddle with every time I think of cigarettes. It not only keeps my hands occupied but reminds me that I am a non-smoker.”**



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