

Quitting Tobacco

Quitting is Important

Quitting tobacco is challenging because nicotine — the active ingredient in all tobacco products — is extremely addictive.

Maybe this is your first attempt to quit. Maybe you have been trying to stop using tobacco for a long time; your determination shows how important quitting is to you.

Busting Myths

I don't smoke enough to get the diseases that smoking causes.

Smoking even 1 cigarette a day can:

- increase your risk of heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure and narrowing of major blood vessels
- lower oxygen supply in your bloodstream, causing shortness of breath and lack of oxygen.

Smoking low-tar, low-nicotine, "organic" or roll-your-own cigarettes is safer.

There is no safe tobacco. All tobacco contains toxic and cancer-causing chemicals that are found in the tobacco plant. Toxic chemicals are added to the rolling papers.

Tobacco relaxes me.

Using tobacco actually increases stress upon your body, by raising your blood pressure and heart rate.

Tobacco makes anxiety and depression worse.

I use smokeless tobacco instead of cigarettes because it's a healthier option.

Smokeless tobacco contains a mix of 4,000 chemicals, including as many as 30 or more that are linked to cancer.

Smokeless tobacco products are not a safe alternative to smoking.

Switching to e-cigarettes (ENDS, or (electronic nicotine delivery system) is safe and will help me quit.

E-cigarettes are not safe. They are a tobacco product.

Users can be exposed to a significant amount of nicotine. Different brands can deliver the same amount of nicotine as low as 2 packs of cigarettes and as high as 19 packs of cigarettes, depending on the number of puffs in the device.

I've smoked so long that it won't make any difference if I quit now.

Research has proven that your body benefits from quitting, no matter how long you've been smoking. Your body can even repair some of the damage that has been done. The extra oxygen also helps your body heal faster from injuries or illness.

(over)

Preparing To Quit

- Instead of looking at quitting as success or failure, remember that every effort to quit is another practice at living your life without tobacco.
- The good news is there are many ways to quit. It's important to choose methods that appeal to you.
- Talk with your health care provider about medicines that may help you quit tobacco.
- Track your triggers to get a better idea of what situations, emotions or both make you want to use tobacco.
- Talk with your family, friends or coworkers about how to support you while you quit. Be specific. See if others would like to quit with you.
- Plan your reward for each day you don't smoke. Keep them easy, and affordable. And above all, do them!

Actually Quitting

- Make your home and vehicle a tobacco-free zone. Give yourself a "safe place."
- Change your environment to help reduce cravings.
 - Get rid of all cigarettes and chewing tobacco.
 - Throw away your ashtrays and lighters.
 - If you're having withdrawal symptoms or cravings, try to avoid smoke-filled places and people who use tobacco.

- Make a plan for situations that trigger you to use tobacco.
- Think positively. Believe you can quit. Tell yourself: "I can do this!"
- Get enough rest.
- Take it one day at a time. Any step you take without tobacco is going to help you. Small steps are better than nothing!
- Remember: most cravings last only 3 to 5 minutes ... so wait it out! The craving will go away whether you use tobacco or not!

Medicines to Help You Quit

It is becoming more common that people need medicines to help them quit tobacco. Medicines are proven to be helpful and increase your chance of long-term success.

Talk with your doctor about which way(s) to quit may help you the most.

- Over-the-counter products include nicotine gum, nicotine lozenge and the nicotine patch.
- Prescription products include Zyban[®], nicotine nasal spray, nicotine inhaler.

Need Help?

Go to allinahealth.org/quit or scan the QR code to learn more about quitting and to find resources to help you quit.

