

How Your Body Recovers After Quitting Using Tobacco

Irritability

- **Reason:** Your body is getting rid of thousands of chemicals found in tobacco. You are no longer being artificially relaxed from nicotine.
- **How to cope:** Drink liquids to flush out the chemicals. Do relaxation exercises. Get more sleep.

Dry Mouth or Bad Taste in Your Mouth

- **Reason:** The lining of your mouth is being replaced with fresh, healthier tissue.
- **How to cope:** Sip plain or flavored waters.

Cough, Phlegm or Sore Throat

- **Reason:** The cilia (small hair-like particles) begin moving residue (phlegm) out of your lungs.
- **How to cope:** Do deep breathing, take brisk walks or suck on cough drops.

Dizziness or Headache

- **Reason:** Your body is getting used to working with less or no nicotine.
- **How to cope:** Get lots of fresh air, take long walks, get extra rest or try a nicotine replacement aid.

Hunger

- **Reason:** Your appetite and senses of taste and smell are coming back.
- **How to cope:** Eat healthful snacks with texture, taste and crunch.

Nervousness or Lack of Concentration

- **Reason:** Your body is getting used to working with less or no nicotine.
- **How to cope:** Do relaxation exercises, take hot baths or showers, do not drink alcohol, or try a nicotine replacement aid.

Sweating

- **Reason:** Your nerve endings are returning to normal.
- **How to cope:** Take baths or showers often, wear cooler clothes or get more fresh air.

Constipation

- **Reason:** Nicotine relaxes your intestines. The lack of nicotine tightens this up. This slows your bowel movements.
- **How to cope:** Eat more fiber (such as whole grains, fruits and vegetables) and drink more water. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about using over-the-counter laxatives until your body readjusts.

Leg Pains, Stiffness or Leg Tingling

- **Reason:** The circulation in your legs is getting better.
- **How to cope:** Raise your feet, massage your legs, eat more potassium (such as bananas) or take warm baths.

Changes in Sleep Patterns

- **Reason:** Your body is getting used to the loss of stimulants found in cigarettes.
- **How to cope:** Get extra sleep and either increase your activity or exercise regularly.

Fatigue or Sleepiness

- **Reason:** Your body is getting used to working with less or no nicotine.
- **How to cope:** Do relaxation exercises, eat or drink less caffeine, exercise often or try a nicotine replacement aid.

This information is based on data from the Minnesota Heart Health Program.