



Changes When Smokers **QUIT**

IMMEDIATELY

Air around you no longer dangerous to children and other adults

2-12 Weeks

- **Circulation improves**
- **Breathing improves**
- **Walking becomes easier**

5 Years

- **Stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker**
- **Risk of cancer of the mouth, throat and esophagus is half that of a smoker**

20 Minutes

- **Blood pressure drops to normal**
- **Pulse rate drops to normal**
- **Temperature in hands and feet increases to normal**

1-9 Months

- **Coughing and sinus congestion decreases**
- **Shortness of breath decreases**
- **Overall energy increases**
- **Lungs increase ability to self-clean and reduce infection**

10 Years

- **Life expectancy comparable to a nonsmoker**
- **Lung cancer death rate is about half the rate of a smoker**
- **Risk of cancer of mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney and pancreas decrease**
- **Precancerous cells are replaced**

8 Hours

- **Carbon monoxide level in blood drops to normal**
- **Oxygen level in blood increases to normal**

48 Hours

- **Nerve endings start regrowing**
- **Ability to smell and taste is enhanced.**

1 Year

Excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker

15 Years

Risk of coronary heart disease comparable to that of a nonsmoker

How to **QUIT** smoking!

Research has shown that following the five key steps below will help you quit for good:



Get ready to quit by picking a date to stop smoking. Get rid of all cigarettes, ash trays and lighters in your home, car and workplace. Make it a rule never to let anyone smoke in your home. Write down why you want to quit and keep this list as a handy reminder.



Get support and encouragement from your family, friends and coworkers.

Studies have shown that you will be more successful when you ask for help. Ask them not to smoke around you or leave cigarettes out around you.



Learn new skills and do things differently. When you get the urge to smoke, try to do something different—talk to a friend, go for a walk or do something you enjoy like gardening or going to the movies. Try to reduce stress with exercise, meditation, hot baths or reading. It's helpful to plan ahead for how you will deal with situations or triggers that will make you want to smoke. Have sugar free gum or candy around to help you handle your cravings. Drink lots of water or other fluids.



Get medication and use it correctly. There are medications available to help you quit and lessen the urge to smoke. Your health care provider can help you decide what medication will work best for you. Don't forget to always talk to your health care provider before taking any over the counter medications, especially when you are pregnant or if you have heart problems.



Be prepared for relapse. Most people relapse or start smoking again within the first three months after quitting. Don't get discouraged if this happens to you or has happened to you before when you've tried to quit. Remember, many people try to quit several times before quitting for good. Certain things or situations can increase your chances of smoking again, such as drinking alcohol, being around other smokers, gaining weight, stress, becoming depressed or having more bad moods than usual. Talk to your health care provider for ways to avoid or deal with these situations.



This material was developed by Mountain-Pacific Quality Health, the Medicare quality improvement organization for Montana, Wyoming, Alaska, Hawaii and the Pacific Territories of Guam and American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. 11SOW-MPQHF-WY-B1-14-02

Five Common Myths About **Quitting** Smoking

Myth #1 Smoking is just a bad habit.

Fact:

Tobacco use is an addiction. According to the U.S. Public Health Service Clinical Practice Guideline, *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence*, nicotine is a very addictive drug. For some people, it can be as addictive as heroin or cocaine.

Myth #2 Quitting is just a matter of willpower.

Fact:

Because smoking is an addiction, quitting is often very difficult. A number of treatments are available that can help.

Myth #3 If you can't quit the first time you try, you will never be able to quit.

Fact:

Quitting is hard. Usually people make two or three tries, or more, before being able to quit for good.

Myth #4 The best way to quit is “cold turkey.”

Fact:

The most effective way to quit smoking is by using a combination of counseling and nicotine replacement therapy such as the nicotine patch, inhaler, lozenges, gum or nasal spray or non-nicotine medications such as varenicline or bupropion SR. Your health care provider or smoking cessation clinic is the best place to go to for help with quitting.

Myth #5 Quitting is expensive.

Fact:

Treatments cost from \$3 to \$10 a day. A pack-a-day smoker spends almost \$1,000 per year. Check with your health insurance plan to find out if smoking cessation medications and/or counseling are covered.

For more information

To get a free copy of other consumer products on quitting smoking, call any of the following toll-free numbers: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 800-352-9295; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 800-CDC-1311; National Cancer Institute, 800-4-CANCER; or log onto the Surgeon General's Web Site at www.surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco.

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