

TIPS FOR QUITTING TOBACCO

The best possible thing you can do for your health if you're a smoker is quit. If you're ready to become a former smoker, these tips can help you succeed.

Set a date

Try to pick a time when temptations to smoke will be relatively low.

Make a plan

Tobacco is a serious addiction and hard to quit. But there are cessation aids available. Talk to your doctor or other healthcare providers about what might be right for you. There's no glory in going cold turkey and making it harder on yourself.

Consider your triggers

Plan alternative responses ahead of time. Do you smoke when you're stressed? Try meditation or start an exercise plan. If you tend to smoke after dinner, have some gum handy.

Make a list of the reasons WHY you're quitting

Constantly remind yourself of what's good about not smoking. When it's 0 degrees outside, isn't it nice not have to stand out there to smoke?

Enjoy the benefits of quitting

Your senses of smell and taste will begin to return after you've quit – plan to buy yourself flowers or a lovely smelling essential oil. Or occasionally treat yourself to a small square of heart-healthy dark chocolate – just be careful not to go overboard and substitute food for smoking.

Tell someone

Ask a friend to help keep you accountable and to be there to listen when you struggle.

Prepare your environment

Go through your home, your desk and your car to remove all traces of cigarettes, lighters, matches and ashtrays. Consider cleaning the interior of your car and washing curtains, bed linens and your clothes to remove traces of smoke and make everything smell fresh.

Create new routines that don't involve cigarettes

If you always take an afternoon break with the smoking crowd, plan for a break 30 minutes earlier and go for a walk instead. If you always smoke after dinner, plan another way to spend your time.

Get some distance from other smokers

Let your smoking friends and family know that your routine is changing and that you'd rather they not smoke around you. Anyone who tries to tempt you back into smoking doesn't have your best interests at heart.

Use the money you don't spend on cigarettes

Save up for something you want. Cigarettes are expensive; give yourself added incentive to quit by planning to use that money for something great.

If you fall down, pick yourself up and keep going

You're not a failure if you succumb to one temptation; you're only a failure if you stop trying. Think about what caused you to smoke and how you might avoid or handle that temptation better next time.