



MASSACHUSETTS

Smoking Cessation





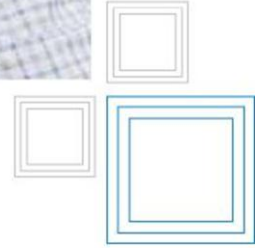
MASSACHUSETTS

Education





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The Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Did you know that quitting smoking is the single most important step you can take to enhance the length and quality of your life?* In fact, according to the Surgeon General's report, your body will begin going through a series of healthy changes within 20 minutes after you smoke your last cigarette.

Healthy changes you see over time:**

So, what happens after you stop smoking?

Twenty minutes after quitting your heart rate drops.

Twelve hours after quitting carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

Two weeks to three months after quitting your heart attack risk begins to drop. Your lung function begins to improve.

One to nine months after quitting your coughing and shortness of breath decrease.

One year after quitting your added risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

Five years after quitting your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker 5–15 years after quitting.

Ten years after quitting your lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker's. Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, and pancreas decreases.

Fifteen years after quitting your risk of coronary heart disease is back to that of a nonsmoker's.

Feel better

You'll free yourself of smoker's cough, and have fewer colds and more energy. Physical activities—even those as simple as walking—will be much easier. Plus, you'll reawaken your senses of taste and smell.

Look better

When you quit, you won't just feel like a kid—you may look like one. You won't develop as many wrinkles. And if that's not enough to make you smile, you'll be glad your teeth are whiter too.

Smell better

Goodbye cigarette breath. Once people take a closer look at your new smoke-free self, you'll be relieved that they're gone. And that your clothes no longer reek of smoke.

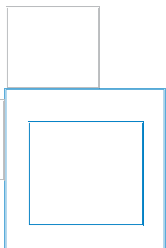
Give your new family the right start

If you're thinking of starting a family, smoking affects the reproductive health of men and women. Quitting can help if you've had infertility or impotence problems. Pregnant women who don't smoke have healthier pregnancies and healthier babies, including fewer miscarriages and birth defects.

*http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED_10_13X_Guide_to_Quitting_Smoking.asp

**http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data-statistics/sgr/sgr_2004/posters/20mins.htm

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The Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Reduce your risk for heart disease

Within 24 hours, your risk for heart attack decreases. In months, your risk for heart attack is half that of a smoker.

Protect your family

Quitting will eliminate your family's increased risk of respiratory illness caused by your secondhand smoke. You'll set a good example for your children, and decrease the chance that they will become smokers.

Reduce your risk for cancer

Within five years, you'll cut your risk of lung cancer death by nearly half. Within ten years, your risk of lung cancer will be almost the same as a nonsmoker's.

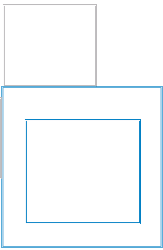
Save money

You'd be surprised at how much smoking costs you. Not only can you save \$1,800 or more a year on cigarettes, but you'll also save on medical bills.

Be footloose and hassle-free

Cast out in the cold, searching for shelter from wind, rain, and snow for a few puffs—who needs it?

Making the decision to go smoke-free is the first step to a healthier, happier you.



Smoking Cessation Tips

Quitting smoking may be one of the most difficult things you've ever tried to do. Cigarettes control your impulses and wreak havoc on your body, but with a little preparation and a lot of commitment, you can finally rid yourself of tobacco for good. You'll go from setting your Quit Day to learning what to do to recognize your cravings, take control, and cut cancer-causing cigarettes out of your life.

Quit Day

Are you ready to quit? Nothing helps more than setting a date to say to yourself, "I am a non-smoker. I will have no cigarettes today." Nobody can say it will be easy, but while you may find yourself confronting cravings, know that they will pass. Refer to the Smoking Cessation Educational Information for more information about how to make this Quit Day your last.

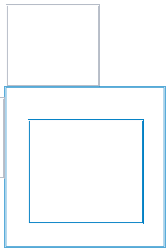
Tips to Help You Through

It may be helpful to anticipate your cravings and prevent them from happening. Here are some tips that may help you get through Quit Day:

- Plan your entire day. Know when you're going to get up, when you're going to eat, and who you'll be with. Plan ahead for when you think the smoking urge might hit, and decide how you're going to handle those urges. A few suggestions:
 - Go for a walk.
 - Take five deep breaths.
 - Use an oral substitute such as sugarless gum.
 - Wait three minutes—the urge will probably pass.
- Spend most of your day in places where you can't smoke. Consider going to a movie, a department store, or other nonsmoking places.
- Buy yourself a treat or do something special to celebrate.
- Drink lots of water or fruit juice.
- Use a pencil or paper clip to substitute for cigarettes.
- Chew on a toothpick or cinnamon stick.
- Take one day at a time. Remind yourself of why you are quitting.

Remember to ask for support. The people supporting you will help you through the rough spots today and in the coming days and weeks. Make sure they know how they can provide support, and take advantage of what they offer. One way they can help is to give up something they enjoy (such as chocolate or caffeine), or a bad habit (such as biting fingernails), so they can understand what you're going through.

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Smoking Cessation Tips

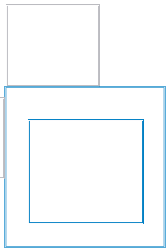
Life after Cigarettes

Once you quit smoking, you should see yourself as a nonsmoker and begin to live that way.

Learn from Your Cravings

The key to living as a nonsmoker is to stop your cigarette cravings from leading you to smoke. Instead of giving in to the urge, use it as a learning experience. Here's how:

- **Recognize triggers.** Recognize the triggers that give you an urge to smoke. They often hit at predictable times such as when you're finishing a meal, under pressure, or having a drink.
- **Dampen the urge.** Continue to think about why you're quitting. Know when you're making excuses for smoking, such as needing a cigarette to relax, and counter those thoughts by thinking about them as a nonsmoker. Go for a walk or do some breathing exercises when feeling stressed.
- **Avoid triggers.** As you become aware of what causes an urge to smoke, find ways to avoid these triggers. Keep your hands busy, or spend more time with your nonsmoking friends.
- **Think positive thoughts.** If self-defeating thoughts creep in, remind yourself that you are a nonsmoker and you have quit for good reasons.
- **Get support.** Talk to a friend or relative. Call a buddy if you get an urge to smoke.



Smoking Cessation Tips

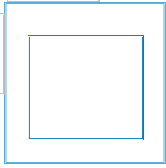
Six Tips to Success

Below are some ideas from the American Cancer Society that you can use to adjust your daily activities to reduce your urge to smoke:

1. Avoid people who tempt you to smoke and places where you are tempted to smoke. Later on you will be able to handle these temptations with more confidence.
2. Alter your habits. Switch to juices or water instead of alcohol or coffee. Take a different route to work. Take a brisk walk instead of a coffee break.
3. Alternatives. Use oral substitutes such as sugarless gum, hard candy, raw vegetables such as carrot sticks or sunflower seeds.
4. Activities. Exercise, or do hobbies that keep your hands busy, such as needlework or woodworking, which help distract you from the urge to smoke.
5. Deep breathing. When you were smoking, you breathed deeply as you inhaled the smoke. When the urge strikes now, breathe deeply and picture your lungs filling with fresh, clean air. Remind yourself of your reasons for quitting and the benefits you'll gain as an ex-smoker.
6. Delay. If you feel that you are about to light up, delay. Tell yourself you must wait at least 10 minutes. Often this simple trick will allow you to move beyond the strong urge to smoke.

Don't forget to continue using your support system. This is going to be an important time to have these people by your side. Let them know how they can help, whether it be a supportive phone call throughout the day or taking a walk in the evening. Remember, these people are there to help you make the hard days seem easier.

Interested in trying nicotine replacement therapy? If your health plan includes pharmacy benefits, it may cover nicotine replacement products (like the patch and gum). Ask your plan administrator or call Member Service at the number on your ID card for more information. (Coverage will depend on your specific health plan. Applicable cost-sharing, such as copayments, apply.)



Resources to Help You Quit Smoking

If you're nervous about quitting or have tried to quit several times with limited success, you may decide that you need more information or help. Give some of these resources a try, but remember, your doctor's advice is always the best course of action:

- Your family. Your partner, parents, and/or kids are there for you. Spend time with them as a nonsmoker and you'll reinforce your new smoke-free lifestyle without even trying.
- Your doctor. Your doctor will be happy to discuss smoking issues with you.
- Your church, mosque, or synagogue. Many houses of worship have counselors or resources that can help with stress management.
- Public library. Your public library will have a number of books on smoking that may provide help and additional information.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and other HMOs
- University-affiliated or medical school-affiliated programs
- Employee assistance programs
- Use of a nicotine replacement product monitored by a doctor (if covered under your pharmacy plan)
- Alternative methods (hypnosis, acupuncture, etc.)* monitored by a practitioner

Additional Resources

- At <http://www.AHealthyMe.com/login>, Wellness > Smoking, you'll find news, interactive tools, quizzes, and information on how to quit smoking.
- trytostop.org, produced by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, features videos, success stories from former smokers, a Quit Wizard[®] that creates a tailored action plan, and a community forum where smokers and former-smokers gather to lend guidance and support. You can also call one of the hotlines when the urge strikes speak with a trained specialist or sign up for the free QuitWorks[™] program.
1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)

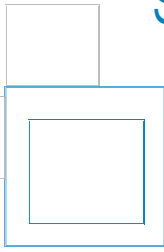
* These may/may not be covered by your health plan, please refer to your subscriber certificate for specifics.



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Planning





Preparing to Quit

Once you have decided you are ready to quit, the first thing you will need to do is set a quit date. Quit Day is the day you choose to stop smoking. Whether it is tomorrow or two weeks from now, make sure the date is realistic. If you set it too far into the future, you may have time to change your mind. Remember you want this to be the day you put down cigarettes for good.

My Quit Day Is

Now that you have taken the first big step toward putting down cigarettes, you will need to prepare yourself and your support system (family, friends, etc.) for your Quit Day. Below are some tips that may help you prepare for your Quit Day.

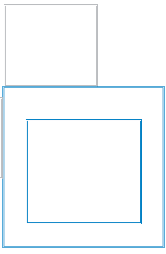
Mark Your Calendar

- Tell family and friends about your decision to quit and make them aware of the date you chose. It will be easier to stick to your quit date with a good support system.
- Remove all smoking items (cigarettes, ashtrays, lighters, etc.) from your home, car, and office.
- Stock up on low-fat snacks to help you with cravings. Pretzels, graham crackers, sugarless gum, and fruit are good choices.

Involve Others

Tell your family and friends how you would like to be supported on Quit Day. Here are some ideas for how they might help:

- Plan an outing.
- Schedule a walk.
- Consider giving up something they enjoy.
- Create a “Quit Kit” and stock it with:
 - Sugarless gum
 - Straws cut into cigarette size
 - Pretzels
 - Lollipops
 - Toothpicks
 - Prunes with pits
 - Hard candy
 - Raw veggies (carrots, celery)
 - Sticks of cinnamon
 - Raisins or other dried fruit



Preparing to Quit

Anticipate Cravings

When you wake up on the morning of your Quit Day, say to yourself, “I will not have a cigarette today.” Then think of yourself as a nonsmoker, and be prepared to deal with cravings.

To help you cope with cravings, think of the four Ds:

- Delay. Delay acting on the urge to smoke.
- Deep breathing. Take five deep breaths. Breathe in slowly, hold it for two seconds, and breathe out slowly. Repeat.
- Drink water. Sip water slowly throughout the day.
- Distract. Take your mind off smoking any way you can, such as by focusing on the task you are doing, or getting up and moving around. Think of your reasons for quitting.

And remember, get plenty of rest!

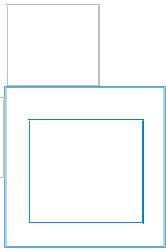
Why Quit?

In addition to the substantial health benefits you receive from quitting, there are many other reasons why people decide to quit and stay smoke-free. Some of those are family (children, spouse, etc.), workplace policies, cost, social acceptance, and setting an example for others.

1. Take a minute to think about the reasons you want to quit and list them below.
2. Write them down and post them in a place you will see them on a daily basis.
3. Use them to stay motivated as you continue the process of quitting smoking.

Reasons Why I Am Quitting

(example: my children)



One Step at a Time

Quitting smoking is probably one of the most difficult things you will ever do. Give your body time to readjust to life without nicotine. Every individual has a different recovery process, so take it one step at a time.

HALT the Urges

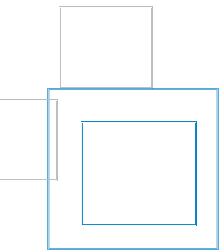
As you move down the road to becoming a nonsmoker, you'll have urges for a cigarette. When this craving hits, many times it will not be a cigarette you want, but an indication of another feeling.

When the urge hits, HALT your actions and focus on what you're feeling. Are you hungry, angry, lonely, or tired? Could you be stressed, sad, depressed, or bored?

Once you decide on your true feeling, you can better handle your urges. For each of the feelings below, develop a coping strategy to HALT a craving.

Feeling	Coping Strategy
Hungry	
Angry	
Lonely	
Tired	
Stressed	
Sad or Depressed	
Bored	
Other	

Now that you're prepared, you'll know to HALT when an urge strikes and avoid having that cigarette.



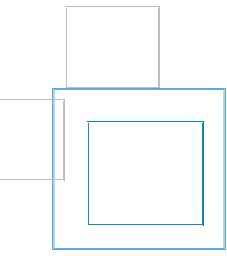
One Step at a Time

What to Do if You Slip

Remember, having one cigarette does not mean you failed at your attempt to quit. There's a difference between a slip and a relapse—a slip can be a learning opportunity. Here are some things you can do if you slip:

- Don't panic. You may feel guilty, but try not to get down on yourself. Remember that it was just one cigarette.
- Review your commitment to quit smoking and reconfirm your effort to do so. Refocus on the reasons you decided to quit.
- Recognize the trigger. Exactly what prompted you to take that cigarette? How can you change the circumstances in the future? What can you learn from this?
- Use coping techniques that have worked for you. People who know at least one coping skill are more likely to remain nonsmokers than those who don't know any. Try these coping skills:
 - Use oral substitutes, such as sugarless gum.
 - Take deep breaths.
 - Go for a walk.
 - Avoid places, people, and things that trigger your cravings.
- Call your support people. Talk it over with them. Let them help you make plans for dealing with the situation in the future.
- See your doctor for extra motivation. Ask your doctor if nicotine replacement therapy may be right for you.

Remember, try to catch a slip as soon as possible. Otherwise, one cigarette may lead to a second and a third and more.



One Step at a Time

Ask for Support

Although you are now a nonsmoker, don't forget your support system. They've been with you through this entire journey and can continue to help. As you start your new activity, bring them along. They can provide continued support as you stop smoking and develop new healthy habits.

Coping with Withdrawal

Over time, smoking has become connected to many of your daily activities, such as eating, waking up, and commuting, and changing these routines is going to be part of the psychological withdrawal you face. Though withdrawal will be hard, the symptoms you experience are actually good news. They won't last long, usually between a few days and a few weeks. If you know the symptoms to look for and ways to cope, it will make the weeks following your Quit Day much easier.

Below are some physical withdrawal symptoms you may experience, as well as tips that can help with getting past them.

- Irritability. Caused by the body's craving for nicotine. Try walks, hot baths, and relaxation techniques.
- Fatigue. Take naps, and don't push yourself during this time. Give your body a chance to heal.
- Trouble sleeping. Refrain from drinking coffee, tea, or soda with caffeine after 4:00 p.m. Try relaxation techniques.
- Coughing. Caused by your lungs clearing out mucus. Sip herbal tea, or try cough drops or sugarless hard candy.
- Dry mouth, sore throat. Sip ice-cold water or fruit juice, or chew gum.

Getting past Withdrawal

According to the American Cancer Society, withdrawal comes in two parts: physical and psychological. The physical may be easier to deal with than the psychological, but you can do it. Symptoms and tips include:

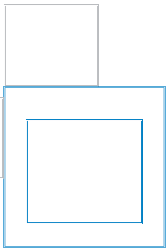
- Craving a cigarette. Wait out the urge. Urges usually last only a few minutes. Distract yourself. Exercise.
- Hunger. Craving for cigarettes may be confused with hunger pangs. Drink water and low-calorie drinks. Eat low-calorie, low-fat snacks such as pretzel sticks, raw veggies, or lollipops.
- Headaches. Take a warm bath or shower. Try relaxation techniques.
- Constipation, gas, stomach pain. Add fiber to your diet (fruits, vegetables, whole grain cereals). Drink six to eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day.



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Activity





Activity: New Healthy Habits

As a new nonsmoker, replace your old bad habit with new healthy ones. Find an activity that gives you pleasure and energy or that reduces stress. Your new habits may even help reduce your cigarette cravings.

Before starting a new habit or activity, think about what you want to do. Make sure it's something you will enjoy. Take this opportunity to try something that you have always wanted to try, such as:

- walking
- dancing
- running
- yoga
- biking
- meditation
- swimming
- painting
- journal writing
- other: _____

What healthy habits are you going to add to your life? Write them here.

