

Quit Yet?

New York City
Department of Health
and Mental Hygiene



Smoking Cessation Fact Sheet

Congratulations! You have decided to stop smoking. Although quitting smoking is a difficult task, many have quit successfully. Below are some helpful hints that will help you quit and remain smoke-free.

- The most important step in quitting smoking is planning your quit day. You'll need to do the following:
 1. Write down at least 5 reasons why you want to stop smoking.
 2. Take a few days and observe your smoking habits; write down the time of day that you smoke, the number of cigarettes smoked, your location, whom you are with, why you wanted to smoke, etc.
 3. Devise an alternative action or behavior or plan for the above times that you normally want to smoke (drink water, for example).
 4. Pick your quit date. Be sure to select a date that isn't too hectic.
 5. Tell all of your friends and family about your decision and ask that they support you.

There are many methods available today to assist you in your decision to quit smoking. It is best to consult with your doctor or pharmacist for dosing recommendations:

- Nicotine Patch – This is available in many strengths to accommodate the different levels of addiction. The patch is put on your arm and the nicotine is slowly absorbed into your body. You proceed with lowering your dosage until you no longer need any help. You can buy this without a prescription.

- Nicotine Gum - This is available in 2 strengths to accommodate the different levels of addiction. The gum is chewed briefly and parked in your mouth to let the nicotine absorb into your body. You can buy this without a prescription.
- Nicotine Nasal Spray – This is available in one strength and is used by spraying into the nose. One dose is equal to a spray into each nostril. The nicotine is absorbed into the nasal cavity. You need a prescription from your doctor in order to use this.
- Inhaler – This is available in one strength and is used by puffing on the mouthpiece continuously for 20 minutes. The nicotine is absorbed into the lining of your mouth. You need to get a prescription from your doctor in order to use this.
- Zyban – This is a medication that does not contain nicotine. This method works by reducing your cravings for nicotine and helping you with withdrawal symptoms.
- Counseling – Your physician or pharmacist might be able to assist you in quitting by helping you create a plan and prepare for a quitting day as well as focus.
- Cold Turkey – Although many people have quit this way, the above methods have been proven relatively more successful.
- When stopping smoking, it is normal to experience symptoms such as anxiety, lack of concentration, moodiness, constipation and difficulty sleeping. These symptoms are temporary and should last no longer than a few weeks.
- Should you get the urge, use the following methods to overcome that urge:
 - delay reaching for a cigarette for 30 seconds
 - drink water
 - do something else (refer to your list that you have already prepared in step 3 above)

Remember, it is never too late to stop. If you have any questions or want to find a local quitting program, call 311.

