



Quit because you can

Your guide to
quitting smoking

quit.org.au

Quitline
13 7848

YES you can quit smoking

Over the years we've learnt a lot about how to quit from those who know – people who have stopped smoking for good. What we have learnt is here in your **Quit because you can** book.

This is your book. Write in it. Underline parts. Flick to the pages that help you.

Keep this book handy so it can help you as you make changes.

It takes time and effort to stop smoking. But millions of people in Australia have already stopped. You can too.

You need to know

Chemicals in tobacco smoke can affect how well some medicines work. These include some medicines for mental health conditions, heart disease and some other conditions. If you are taking any medicines, talk with your doctor or pharmacist as they may need to look at your medicines when you stop smoking.

If you are living with depression, anxiety or another mental illness, it is best to see your doctor before you stop smoking. With the right support, many people living with mental illness have quit and they mostly feel a lot better, both in body and mind.

Quit acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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Reasons to stop smoking



**"I was never able to keep up
with my kids, I wanted to be
able to kick around the ball
without being out of breath."**

Do you know why you want to stop smoking?

People who have quit smoking say it's important to be clear about your reasons. Work out what reasons are important to you. You may have tried to quit before, maybe many times. It's still a good idea to remind yourself why you want to quit.

What are you looking forward to when you stop smoking?



Feeling healthy

Less coughs, phlegm and wheezing. Fight off colds and the flu more easily.



Getting fit

Exercising becomes easier.



Less stress

After feelings of withdrawal are over, many people feel less stressed, anxious and depressed and more positive about life, compared to when they were smoking.



More money

15 cigarettes each day = \$10,000 every year

How much money will you save? Use our calculator at quit.org.au.



Freedom from the hassles of smoking

White teeth, no stained fingers, the house and car smelling fresh and clean, and never having to check you have enough cigarettes.



Taking back control

Many people come to realise that they are dependent and are not really choosing to smoke. Taking back control feels good.



More confidence

Once you succeed, you will have more confidence to take on other challenges.

TRY THIS

Even now you might still be wondering whether you really want to quit smoking. Take your time to think about your reasons for wanting to smoke and your reasons for wanting to quit.

List all your reasons on both sides and circle the three most important ones on each list. Then put a star next to the one reason that is most important to you – just one star, not one for each list.

Why I want to smoke

Why I want to stop

Your decision might be very close or there may be a clear winner. The important thing is to decide which you most want to do and act on that decision.

You may set out to quit with a part of you still wanting to smoke. That's okay. Accept this and commit to quitting. What did you get from smoking? How can you get that in other ways?

Before or during pregnancy

Stopping smoking at any time during your pregnancy helps protect you and your baby from serious harm. It will make you feel good and give your baby a better start in life.

Stop smoking for surgery

When you stop before surgery, you have a lower risk of complications, which can mean a faster recovery and less time in hospital.

Protect others

You can protect your children from dangerous tobacco smoke in the air. Secondhand smoke can cause serious illness in babies and children. When you stop smoking, your children are also less likely to take up smoking in the future.

Helping you recover from illness

If you are living with an illness such as cancer or heart disease, quitting smoking can give you a better response to your treatment and a better chance of recovery. If you are living with heart disease, stopping smoking lowers your risk of having another heart attack. Stopping smoking is vital for people who are living with lung conditions, diabetes, poor blood circulation, gum disease and many other health conditions.

**Quitting smoking
improves your health
now and in the
long-term, even if
you have a smoking-
related condition.**

What happens when you quit smoking?

Within 6 hours

- › Your heart rate slows and your blood pressure becomes more stable.

Within a day

- › The level of toxic carbon monoxide in your blood drops and oxygen reaches your heart and muscles more easily.
- › Your fingertips become warmer and your hands may be steadier.

Within a week

- › Your sense of taste and smell may improve.

Within 2 months

- › You cough and wheeze less.
- › Your immune system begins to recover so your body is better at fighting off infection.
- › Your blood is less thick and sticky, and blood flow to your hands and feet improves.

→ **The day you stop smoking your body starts to recover.**

Within 6 months

- › Your lungs' natural cleaning system starts to recover, becoming better at removing mucus, tar and dust from your lungs.
- › You are less likely to cough up phlegm.

After 1 year

- › Your lungs are healthier and you are breathing easier than if you'd kept smoking.

Within 5 years

- › There is a large drop in your risk of stroke which continues to decrease over time.
- › For women, the risk of cervical cancer is the same as someone who has never smoked.

After 10 to 15 years

- › Your risk of lung cancer is half that of someone your age who still smokes.

After 20 years

- › Your risk of heart attack and stroke is close to that of a person who has never smoked.

Smoking causes disease

Smoking harms almost every organ in your body. But because it happens gradually, you may not notice. The strain put on your body by smoking often causes years of suffering. Tobacco smoke is made up of over 7000 chemicals. At least 69 of them are known to cause cancer. Many of these chemicals pass through your lungs into your bloodstream. They go everywhere your blood flows.

Smoking can cause many serious diseases including:

- › **cancer** of the lungs, mouth, nose, throat, sinuses, oesophagus, pancreas, kidney, stomach, liver, bladder, bowel, ureter, ovary, cervix and bone marrow (leukaemia)
- › **lung diseases** such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis
- › **heart disease, stroke and diabetes**
- › **poor blood circulation** in feet and hands, which can lead to pain and, in severe cases, gangrene and amputation
- › **other conditions** such as blindness, hip fractures, rheumatoid arthritis, painful ulcers and for men, erection problems.

Two in three people who smoke all their lives will die on average 10 years earlier than people who don't smoke.

All cigarettes are toxic

It doesn't help if you smoke weaker-tasting cigarettes such as those labelled 'fine', 'smooth' or 'white'. You still end up inhaling the same amount of chemicals as you would from stronger-tasting cigarettes, so they do the same amount of damage.

Your body can only start to recover when you stop smoking completely.

There is no safe level of smoking

Cutting down the amount of tobacco you smoke every day may save you money, but studies show that it does very little for your health compared to stopping smoking completely. Even smoking a few cigarettes a day increases your risk of early death. Cutting down can help some people when used as a step towards quitting altogether.

Checklist ✓

Deciding to quit

From the following list, tick the things you are looking forward to when you have quit for good.

- ☐ **Having more energy to play sport or keep up with the kids.**
- ☐ **Knowing I'm back in control and no longer dependent.**
- ☐ **Freedom from the hassle of always checking that I have enough cigarettes.**
- ☐ **I will have more money to spend any way I choose.**

Add your own ideas

A man with a beard and mustache, wearing a blue cap and an orange high-visibility shirt, is sitting in the driver's seat of a car. He is looking down at a black tray filled with cigarettes that he is holding in his hands. The background is slightly blurred, showing the interior of the car and some outdoor elements.

Preparing to quit smoking

"The last time I quit I set a date, got rid of all my ashtrays, lighters and things that triggered me to have a smoke and never looked back."

Most people are not 100% sure about quitting and many worry about how they might cope without cigarettes. This is normal. Don't put off quitting because you feel this way – there is lots of help to get you through.

Making a start

Making a plan can help by having some strategies ready for when you feel the urge to smoke.

If you've tried to stop smoking before, what helped? What didn't?

Make your quit plan:

- 1 Understand nicotine dependence
- 2 Know why you smoke
- 3 Choose the best way to quit for you
- 4 Start putting your quit plan into action



1 > Understand nicotine dependence

It's the nicotine in tobacco that keeps you dependent. After you've been smoking for a while, your body gets used to nicotine and relies on it to feel normal.

Do you have any of these signs of nicotine dependence?

- › You smoke your first cigarette within 30 minutes of waking up.
- › You smoke more than 10 cigarettes per day.
- › You have cravings and feelings of withdrawal when you try to stop.

Nicotine affects the chemicals in your brain, and after a puff, you may feel good for a moment or two. It may make you feel relaxed or more alert but this doesn't last long.

After a while you may feel tense or on edge or you may find it hard to focus on what you are doing. But your next cigarette relieves these feelings. These up-and-down mood changes over the day are common among people who smoke. Stopping smoking breaks this smoking-stress cycle.

2 > Know why you smoke

Some common reasons why people smoke are:

- › **dependence:** to relieve the craving for nicotine
- › **habit:** feeling like smoking while doing things or taking a break, such as after a meal or watching TV
- › **emotions:** feeling stressed, upset, angry, frustrated, bored or happy
- › **pleasure:** to enjoy something even more or to reward yourself
- › **social pressure:** feeling part of the crowd, bonding with other people who smoke.

These often trigger cravings to smoke. They may be quite strong bonds. Knowing your triggers can help you work out how to respond to them.

When do you smoke? Tick ☒ which apply to you



Having coffee



Watching TV



After food



Other times?



With friends



With alcohol



When
you're angry,
stressed
or bored



Other emotions?

→ Use the **Smoking Diary** – See page 23

You can learn about your habits while you prepare to stop.

Tear out your *Smoking Diary* and carry it with you everywhere **for a day**.

The best way to quit smoking is to:

Get some support
Quitline (13 7848)



Use stop smoking medications

3 > Choose the best way to quit for you

Some people see quitting as a private battle. But getting help is not a sign of weakness or lack of willpower – it's a smart way to quit.

Get some support

Contact Quitline

Quitline is a welcoming, free and confidential counselling service. Quitline counsellors are experts at helping you gain the skills to quit smoking for good. We will help you build and keep up your motivation to quit and help you create a quit plan that works for you. We can support and encourage you throughout your quit journey. You can call Quitline (13 7848) for the usual cost of a local call, ask us to call you for free or contact us online at quit.org.au/quitline (see page 45).

Quitline for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

To get culturally sensitive support to quit anywhere across Australia, call 13 7848 and ask to speak with a counsellor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (more details on page 46).

Talk to your doctor, pharmacist or other health professional

Doctors and pharmacists can give you advice and support. They can also talk to you about which stop smoking medications will suit you best. You can buy some of these medications more cheaply with a script from your doctor.

Chemicals in tobacco smoke can affect how well some medicines work. These include some medicines for mental health conditions, heart disease, asthma and some other conditions. It's important to speak to your doctor if:

- 1 you are taking any medicines
- 2 you have any health conditions, including heart disease or diabetes, or if you are living with a mental illness
- 3 you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

For more details about services, see page 45.

Using stop smoking medications

You are more likely to quit for good when you use stop smoking medications. They are useful for people who show any signs of nicotine dependence (see page 12).



Gum
Lozenge
Mini-lozenge
Mouth spray
Inhalator

Stop smoking medications reduce feelings of withdrawal, such as cravings, anxiety or restlessness, but they tend not to stop them altogether. Most people form a strong bond between smoking and habits and emotions. So you are likely to still get some cravings in situations where you used to smoke. This is where Quitline can help with ideas about how to deal with cravings and triggers.

Nicotine patches, lozenges, mouth spray, inhalator and gum work by replacing some of the nicotine you usually get from tobacco. Using nicotine replacement therapy is safe for most adults trying to stop smoking. They do not contain the dangerous chemicals found in tobacco smoke.

For many people, nicotine replacement therapy works best when you use patches together with a faster-acting type, such as lozenges, gum, mouth spray or inhalator. The patch is put on once a day. You can use a faster-acting type when you feel like smoking. Even better, when you think a craving might strike, use it before the craving takes hold. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about which nicotine replacement therapy is best for you. You can buy some nicotine patches at a discount through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), with a script from your doctor.

Your doctor may **prescribe stop smoking tablets** which you can buy at a discount through the PBS. Your doctor can advise you on how they work and if they're suitable for you. If you have one or some cigarettes, it is safe to keep using your stop smoking medication, and to keep trying to quit.

What about vaping products?

Vaping products can only be supplied by pharmacies. It is important that you talk to your doctor or pharmacist about your options to stop smoking. Unlike stop smoking medications, vaping products are 'unapproved' goods. That means Australia's medicines regulator has not assessed any vaping product for safety, quality or how much it helps with quitting smoking.

Quitline counsellors can support people who are using vapes to stop smoking and can also support people who are trying to stop vaping.

Gather ideas

Talk to other people who have stopped about how they did it. Some useful websites and services are on page 45. Remember, different things work for different people.

Learning from stopping in the past

Have you tried to stop smoking before? What helped? What didn't? Are there situations you need to prepare for? Write these down in *My quit plan* (page 18).

Quitting abruptly

Quitting abruptly or suddenly is a popular way to quit smoking. You are more likely to quit for good when you use stop smoking medications together with Quitline.

Cutting down to quit

Some people quit by cutting down the number of cigarettes they smoke each day before stopping. If you decide to do this:

- › it's important to have a clear plan and a quit date
- › use a support service like Quitline to help you stick to your goals
- › talk to your doctor or pharmacist about using stop smoking medications while cutting down.

Get help from friends and family

Encouragement from friends and family is important. If you do talk to your friends and family about your quitting, explain how they can help – for example, by not offering you cigarettes if they smoke or by being patient if you are a bit moody at first.

Living with someone who smokes

If you live with someone who smokes, it can be good to talk to them about your plans. If they are ready to stop smoking too, then quitting together can help. However, if they are not ready, at least ask for their help by not making it any harder.

- › Can you talk things over before you stop?
- › Can you make your house smokefree? If this isn't possible, see if you can agree to some rooms being smokefree.
- › How will you catch up without smoking cigarettes?
- › Can they keep cigarettes out of sight?
- › What kind of help will you need from them? What help are they willing to give?

4 > Start putting your quit plan into action

Make a decision about how you are going to stop.

You may choose to:

- › Contact Quitline (Ph: 13 7848 or online – see page 45).
- › Use a stop smoking medication.
- › Talk to your doctor, pharmacist or other health professional.
- › Set a date to quit.

If you don't stop on your quit date, don't worry. It is not a test. It's just a way of helping you focus on what you need to do to quit and to put your plans into action. Just choose another time and have another go. Don't give up giving up.

Practise quitting

If you haven't tried to stop recently, you might set yourself some smaller goals to see how you would go before you quit. Experiment by not smoking at times when you normally would, such as when you're out with friends or having a break with other people who smoke at work. This will help you work out how much you need to prepare for these situations when you stop for good.

TRY THIS

Throw away all cigarettes, lighters and ashtrays in your home and car. If your partner smokes, suggest that they stop too or only smoke outside the house.

**Remember, you
will be more likely
to succeed with
Quitline (13 7848)
plus stop smoking
medications.**

My quit plan

Write out your quit plan

Use your Smoking Diary (page 23) to help you

My main reasons to quit:

The support I will get:

The stop smoking medication I will use (prescribed stop smoking tablets or nicotine patches, lozenges, gum, mouth spray or inhalator):

My three main triggers to smoke:

Instead of smoking I will:

I will take action by (✓):

☐ Calling Quitline 13 7848 on:

☐ Setting a quit date on:

☐ Making an appointment with my doctor on:

Change or add to your plan if you find you need new ways to deal with difficult times.

Staying quit



"I told my family and friends my quit day, so they could help me when I needed it the most. I couldn't have done it without them."

Now it's time to put all your work into practice and quit.

You are ready

- › You've made your decision to stop.
- › You have any information or support you feel you need.
- › You've done your planning.
- › You've started putting your plan to quit into action.

Stick to your decision

You're doing the right thing.

Understand withdrawal symptoms

Withdrawal symptoms are the way your body reacts when it stops getting nicotine and all the other chemicals in tobacco smoke. Think of them as signs that your body is recovering from smoking.

Common withdrawal symptoms include:

- › cravings (the urge or desire to smoke)
- › being easily upset: feeling irritable, frustrated, impatient, depressed or anxious
- › feeling restless or finding it hard to concentrate
- › changed sleeping patterns
- › wanting to eat more and weight gain.

Some people may also have:

- › mood swings or less positive moods
- › less interest in doing things they normally enjoy
- › coughing, sneezing or dizziness
- › mouth ulcers
- › upset bowel and/or digestion
- › more dreams.

Usually, you won't have all of these symptoms, and those that do affect you will rarely last more than a few weeks.

Remember
The best way
to quit smoking =
support
(Quitline 13 7848)
+ stop smoking
medications

Some feelings of withdrawal will come and go over the first week. Most are gone within two to four weeks; some people may have them for longer. These feelings fade as your body gets used to being without tobacco.

Each craving usually lasts a short time but may be strong. Over time, cravings will happen less often. You may get the odd craving long after other feelings of withdrawal have gone. These cravings are triggered by being in situations where you used to smoke.

If you have trouble with certain feelings of withdrawal, plan how you could cope or work around them. For example, warn your family you might be cranky for a few weeks and ask for their patience.

The more feelings of withdrawal you have, the more you will benefit from using prescribed stop smoking tablets or nicotine patches, lozenges, gum, mouth spray or inhalator.

After feelings of withdrawal are over, many people feel more positive and less stressed, anxious and depressed than when they were smoking.

Quitting smoking and your mood

Early on, some people feel that their moods are up and down or all over the place, for example getting angry over small things. This is quite normal and it will pass, but you don't have to cope without support. Your doctor and Quitline can help you find ways to take care of your mental wellbeing.

Giving up cigarettes can also feel like losing a friend. Your emotions will settle down over time and you will feel more confident as you get used to new ways of managing the ups and downs of life without cigarettes.

Tips for managing stress are on pages 34 to 36.

If you have a lived experience of mental illness and you are concerned about how quitting or cutting down may affect your mood, Quitline can help. Talk with your Quitline counsellor about how they can help you track your mood and experiences during the weeks you are quitting and how they can support you to stop smoking.

Coping with cravings

Few people can quit without feeling the urge or desire to smoke. The first week after you quit can be the hardest, as cravings can be stronger and more frequent.

As well as using stop smoking medication to reduce cravings you can also:

- 1 Change your space
- 2 Use coping thoughts
- 3 Change what you do

1 > Change your space

Cravings most often happen in places that remind you of smoking.

You can reduce how often you get cravings and how strong they are by making your space 'quitting friendly'.

Try these tips:

- › Make your home and car smokefree. If that's not possible, have at least one smokefree area for yourself.
- › Use places where you are not allowed to smoke as 'protection' until the craving passes.
- › Avoid your usual smoking spots and shops selling tobacco.
- › If you can, make sure there is no tobacco in your house or car.
- › Ask others not to smoke around you or move away from them.
- › Avoid situations you know will be tough while your cravings are still bad.
- › Choose outings where you're not likely be around people smoking.

[continued page 27]

Cravings most often happen in situations that remind you of smoking.

One day smoking diary

You can learn about your habits while you prepare to quit.

Tear out your Smoking Diary and carry it with you everywhere for a day.

First, write down the number of cigarettes left in your pack:

**Cigarettes
in pack**

Date

Each time you have a cigarette, or feel a craving, fill in:

- › the time
- › what you are doing
- › what you are feeling

- › how much you feel the need for a cigarette, using the point system below:

1 = I could do without it

2 = I feel like it

3 = I need it

4 = I really need it

5 = I'm desperate for it

One day
smoking
diary

Time

What I'm doing/person I'm with

Feeling/mood

Value (1-5)

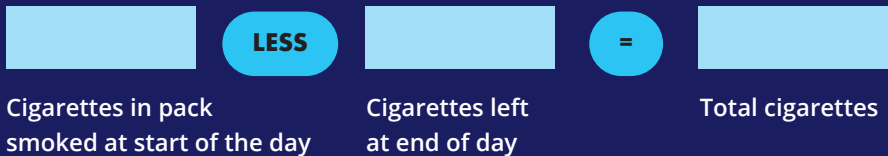
What I did

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Even after a day or so, you'll have a good idea about what makes you want to smoke, the times you smoke and the importance of each cigarette. These are your smoking 'triggers'.

Some of these triggers may cause cravings after you stop smoking. However, you may only find out which are hard or easy to resist after you've spent some time without smoking.

At the end of the day, count the number of cigarettes left in your pack and work out how many cigarettes you smoked.



If you open another pack don't forget to include those cigarettes in your sums.

If you missed noting down any cigarettes in your diary, can you remember when they were? If you smoked cigarettes without noticing, you may need to be on your guard around cigarettes when you stop, so you don't reach for one simply out of habit.

TRY THE 4Ds



- › **Delay** acting on the craving for at least five minutes, the urge to smoke will pass



- › **Deep breathe**, slowly and deeply



- › **Drink water** to take time out, sip slowly



- › **Do something else** to keep your hands busy. Put on some music, go for a walk or ring a friend

2 › Use coping thoughts

The way you think about quitting can help you resist tempting situations.

Try these tips:

- › Take note of thoughts that make you want to smoke and use coping self talk. Tell yourself 'I can handle this without cigarettes', 'This craving will pass' or 'I'm not going to smoke, not even a puff'.
- › Remind yourself of your main reasons to quit. Carry something with you that will help you stay motivated, such as a note or picture.
- › Think of how quitting has changed your life for the better.
- › Focus your mind on something else – try music, TV, reading, daydreaming.
- › Take it one day at a time – just plan to not smoke today.
- › Talk to someone about how you're feeling.

Call Quitline 13 7848

Quitline counsellors can discuss more ways to respond to cravings and help you work out what might help you.

3 > Change what you do

Changing your routine is a great way to break your smoking habits. Which habits or routines make you want to smoke? Use these tips to help you plan for cravings once you've quit.

| Habits that trigger cravings | ➔ | Routine-change strategy |
|--|---|---|
| › When you wake up | | › Have a shower first thing |
| › With coffee (or tea) | | › Change to a different drink, brand of coffee or mug; or change the place where you drink it, hold your cup in your other hand |
| › On your break at work | | › Read a book; or listen to a podcast; sit in a different place or with different people |
| › At the computer at home | | › Shift your desk around or redecorate it |
| › After lunch/dinner | | › Go for a walk; clean your teeth |
| › At afternoon tea | | › Try a herbal tea; read the paper |
| › Straight after work | | › Do some exercise or meditation |
| › Just before you start dinner | | › Have dinner earlier or later |
| › With alcohol | | › Change to a different drink; hold drink in smoking hand |
| › As you plan the next task/chore | | › Breathe deeply or try a quick relaxation exercise |
| › As a reward e.g. completing a chore | | › Listen to music; have a piece of fruit |
| › When you're with a person who smokes | | › Chew gum; bring a water bottle |
| › At night in front of the TV | | › Change the furniture around; hold a stress ball; do some stretches |
| › Just before bed | | › Have a warm drink or herbal tea; read a book |

As you become better at doing things instead of smoking, your cravings will tend not to happen as often or be as strong. If you are unsure of what to do in some situations, ask or watch people who don't smoke.

Just one WILL hurt

Having 'just one' is the way that most people go back to regular smoking. Quitting means resisting the urge to smoke even one cigarette, despite the cravings, the habit, the pressure and your own emotional reasons.

Reward yourself

Congratulate yourself every time you beat the urge to smoke. Remember to treat yourself from time to time with the money you've saved, such as with a movie, new music, flowers or a meal out.

Stay on track

Don't let other people talk you into having a cigarette. It's your decision – don't let others pressure you. Tell them 'no' like you mean it.

Caffeine

Tea, coffee, cola drinks and chocolate all contain caffeine. Chemicals in tobacco smoke may speed up how fast your body gets rid of caffeine. So when you stop smoking, you might feel more affected by caffeine. When you stop smoking, it's a good idea to have less of these products and have non-caffeine drinks.

Social situations

For many people, having a cigarette with friends who smoke is a well-worn habit.

Here are some strategies when going out with friends.

- › Before you go out, remind yourself of your reasons why you want to quit smoking.
- › Avoid your friends who smoke for the first few days or weeks.
- › Have a quitting buddy or friend who doesn't smoke with you as support.
- › You have the right to refuse a cigarette and can do so without upsetting others. Find some good phrases: 'Please don't offer me smokes, I'm quitting' or 'No thanks, I don't smoke'.
- › Take along something to keep your hands and mouth busy when you have a craving, for example, gum, a watch, a necklace, bottled water, phone, a stress ball or a pen.
- › Excuse yourself and go to the bathroom to wash your face or freshen up.
- › Tell yourself it's okay to go home early if it's getting too tough. The money you've saved by quitting could help pay for a taxi if needed.
- › Be wary of the 'just one won't hurt' thought.

Smoking and alcohol

For many people, smoking and drinking alcohol go hand-in-hand.

If you regularly drink alcohol, talk to your doctor about your plans to stop smoking. You may be advised not to drink while taking some stop smoking medications.

Some practical tips to help may include:

- › Avoiding alcohol for a few weeks after you stop smoking, most of all in situations where you used to smoke
- › Cutting down on how much you drink, for example by having one or more glasses of water between alcoholic drinks: research confirms that when you start feeling the effects of alcohol, it becomes harder to resist smoking
- › Changing your regular drink to something you don't usually have, to remind yourself that things are different.

About weight

If you smoke, the best thing you can do for your health is to quit.

Weight gain is not always a part of quitting, but it can occur in the first few months after stopping smoking. This may be because:

- › without nicotine your body has lower energy demands and needs less food
- › you may feel more hungry due to nicotine withdrawal.

If you do put on weight, try not to be discouraged. By stopping smoking you're doing great things for your health.

Making small changes every week can be easier and longer lasting than trying to make a lot of changes at once. These could include:

- › Think of ideas for comforts and rewards that are not food based, like music, flowers, a day out, your favourite TV show, playing with a pet, doing a hobby, or a hot drink like herbal tea.
- › Remove or reduce ultra-processed snacks (e.g. chips, biscuits, lollies, soft drink) in the pantry or fridge. If that's not possible, try to put them out of sight.
- › Plan your meals and snacks ahead of time. Prepare some healthy snacks: whole fruits (not fruit juice), baked beans, nuts, and celery and carrot sticks or vegetable strips with hommus or peanut butter. Drink water.

If worrying about weight gain is stopping you from quitting, getting some support is a very good idea.

Talk to a health professional who can give you advice. They can help you make a healthy eating and exercise plan that suits you. Ask about what ongoing support they can offer. Your doctor can also refer you to a dietitian or other specialist.

For tips about healthy eating and tasty recipes, visit livelighter.com.au.

TRY THIS

During the first week, make changes to *My quit plan* if you need to.

- › Did you use the ideas you wrote down? How are they working?
- › Do they need changing?
- › Are there any situations where you had trouble with cravings?
- › What ways could you deal with this situation next time?

Quitting checklist ✓

- **I have planned how to handle the places and events that I know make me want to smoke.**
- **I will keep my hands busy by doing something or by fiddling with a pen, mobile phone or some beads.**
- **Even if I decide to have alcohol, I will stick to my decision to quit.**
- **I know it's okay to avoid situations that will be tough while cravings are still strong and frequent.**
- **I often think about what I've achieved and the good things that have come out of quitting. I will remind myself of these when I next feel like smoking.**
- **I will reward myself from time to time with the money I have saved. I will congratulate myself every time I beat the urge for a cigarette.**

Your new healthier life

Have your urges to smoke gone away? Or are you getting them less often? That is great news, however your quitting journey isn't over just yet. Getting rid of smoking is a big change in your life. Learning to enjoy and value life without cigarettes is the next step. For some people this comes naturally, while others find it harder.

Find new habits to take the place of smoking

People use cigarettes for many things. For example, to concentrate, be social, relax, fill in time, when hungry, as a reward and to cope with feelings such as stress, anger or grief.

- › What did you think cigarettes gave you? Look at your list on page 6.
- › Can you do each of these things as well as when you used to smoke?

If you answer yes, this proves that smoking wasn't really useful in this situation and that you haven't lost out by quitting.

If you answer no, it's really important to try out new things to replace those things you felt smoking gave you. Find fun and relaxing things to do with the time and money you've saved by stopping smoking. Call Quitline (13 7848) if you need ideas. Once you find things that work, make them a part of your routine.

TRY THIS

Revive an old hobby or interest now that you have more time and money. Or take up something that you've always wanted to: take up art, start a blog, research your family history, start a new sport or try a new hobby. Find something you really enjoy as it will help you to relax and to take time out.

Confront old smoking situations

While you were quitting you may have avoided people who smoke or places where you used to smoke.

When you're ready, prepare for and face these risky situations without smoking. The more time you spend in old smoking situations without cigarettes, the less likely it is you will get cravings. In time, you'll feel more and more confident.

If you used stop smoking medications to help you quit, you also need to prove to yourself that you can cope in old smoking situations without this extra support.

When you stop using stop smoking medications

If you still have cravings and feelings of withdrawal after you stop using stop smoking medications, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. Ongoing support from Quitline can also help.

The quitting blues

Some people feel sad about stopping smoking. Even though people want to stop, they may feel they are losing something that has been part of their life, sometimes a big part. This is a normal reaction. It usually passes, but it may take some time.

**Remember,
it's normal to
get cravings in
situations where
you used to smoke.
Resisting cravings
is a necessary step
in making them go
away.**

If you are finding it tough, try to stop yourself from dwelling too much on missing smoking, as this can bring on cravings.

Focus instead on the good things that quitting has brought you. If these feelings continue and you're finding it hard to cope, talk to your doctor.

Coping with stress

If you used smoking to deal with stress (as many people do), then you are likely to get cravings to smoke next time you're stressed out.

Take your time before reacting. Remember, having a cigarette is not going to make the problem go away.

Resisting cravings and using other strategies to cope will make you less likely to have strong cravings in future stressful situations.

Now that you don't smoke, you've learnt new skills and have shown great strength of mind. How else can you get the support you need instead of falling back on a cigarette? Is there someone you trust who you could talk to? Do you have new things to do that help you relax and take time out?

TRY THIS

Emergency plan

Think about a sudden stress or crisis that happened in your past when you were smoking, for example, bad news, an argument or a break-up. Imagine going through it now, but without smoking. What strategies could you use? Write down your emergency plan.

- › Ask a friend if you can call them (day or night) if disaster strikes
- › Call Quitline (13 7848) or Lifeline (13 11 14) for support

- ›
- ›
- ›

Doing something about stress

Below, list the main sources of stress in your life. Now think about how much control you have or want to have over these sources of stress. Next to each of these, write the number 1, 2 or 3 depending on whether you believe it is possible for you to:

- 1 Get rid of the source of stress altogether.
- 2 Make changes to reduce the stress.
- 3 Learn to cope with the situation as it is.

For example, you might decide to try to accept and learn to cope with the peak-hour traffic. This means you will continue to drive in peak hour and you will find ways of dealing with the stress (e.g. play calming music, keep a drink bottle in the car and sip water slowly). There are no right or wrong answers. Another person may make different choices for the same situation.

| Sources of stress | 1, 2 or 3 | Ideas/plans/strategies |
|-------------------|-----------|------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

When thinking of ideas to reduce stress, ask yourself if they are easy to do and can fit into your routine easily.

TRY THIS

Tips for managing stress

| | |
|--|--|
| Self-care can make a difference | › Getting into healthy habits has been shown to help improve mood, decrease stress and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. |
| Eating well | › Fresh, unprocessed food gives your mind and body the nutrients it needs to cope better with stress. For advice and recipes visit livelighter.com.au . See page 31 for more. |
| Regular exercise | › Find activities you enjoy – for tips on how to get active visit livelighter.com.au . |
| Sleeping well | › For advice talk to your doctor or visit sleephealthfoundation.org.au/all-healthy-sleep . |
| Spend time in nature | › Like a park or garden. |
| Look after your mental energy | › Allow extra time to get things done. Try not to take on more than you can handle. Can you ask for help if you need it? If being on social media makes you feel tired and overloaded, ‘screen-free’ breaks may be helpful. |
| Mental wellbeing | <div>› If you are living with stress from a health condition or trauma, you may find support groups online or in your area. Check out the digital mental health resources at emhprac.org.au or ask your doctor for support.</div> <div>› Learning mindfulness techniques may help some people: healthdirect.gov.au/mindfulness.</div> |
| Family and social life | <div>› Try to be around friends and family who support you. Talk about your problems – don’t bottle them up.</div> <div>› Check with your local council to find groups or activities in your area, like yoga or walking groups. Men’s sheds bring men together to socialise and gain skills.</div> |

For more advice, talk to your doctor or ask for a referral to another health professional. More **general support services** are listed on page 45.

Sudden strong cravings

Sometimes, you might get a craving out of nowhere, even years after stopping. This is normal and doesn't mean you are failing at quitting.

This happens because you return to a situation that is linked to your past smoking habit, even if you don't recognise it at first. For example, you might start craving a cigarette when:

- › visiting a place where you used to live when you smoked
- › you meet up with friends or family who smoke
- › on holiday or returning from holiday.

Once you've gotten through withdrawal, you are no longer dependent on nicotine. Expect these cravings to happen and see them for what they are – just memories of smoking – and let them pass. Draw on the strategies you used when you first stopped to deal with these situations.

Social pressure

If your friends or family are making quitting harder for you, explain to them how you feel. Spend time relaxing with people who are glad to see you looking after your health.

The new you

You might still see yourself as a smoker who's quit. Start to think of yourself as someone who sees no real use for cigarettes. The more non-smoking experiences you have, the more you'll feel like a non-smoker or a proud ex-smoker.

TRY THIS

Think about your plans at work and home for the next few weeks.

- › Can you make one or two changes to reduce the pressure?
- › Can you talk openly about problems with those involved?

Checklist ✓

Becoming a non-smoker

- I have changed my routine to include new hobbies, new comforts and new ways to enjoy life.
- I am finding new ways to relax, such as deep breathing, massage and making time to relax.
- I will cope with the occasional surprise cravings and know that I am still succeeding at quitting.
- I am planning how to cope with stressful situations. If I get stressed, I will take time to think before I react and remind myself of other ways to cope. I will ring Quitline if I think I need more support or ideas.
- I will value the good things about being quit and give myself credit for what I've achieved.

Well done!

Tips for tough times

A photograph of two women sitting outdoors. The woman in the foreground, with long curly brown hair, is wearing a blue and white striped shirt under a dark blue vest. She is holding a black coffee cup with both hands and looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The woman in the background, with blonde hair, is wearing a brown jacket and a grey scarf, and is also looking towards the camera. They are sitting on a bench or ledge next to a brick wall. The background is slightly blurred, showing a street and some greenery.

"I tried to spend more time with my friends who don't smoke, and to think of myself as a non-smoker."

Trying to quit can feel hard. You might be going along OK, but suddenly ...

Warning signs

You keep on thinking 'Just one would be OK' or 'It'd be great to smoke just one a month or one a week'.

But why weren't you smoking just one a month or just one a week before you quit? The answer is because nicotine dependence is really strong. That's why you've had to work so hard to quit. Don't let nicotine control you again!

You're really missing smoking and question whether quitting is worth the effort.

Sometimes trying to quit can feel really tough, but you can get through it. It's normal for the memory of smoking to be linked to enjoyment as nicotine triggers reward chemicals. Find other ways to treat yourself and keep doing things that you enjoy every day. Reach out to friends, family, or health support services like Quitline to talk through these feelings.

You take puffs of other people's cigarettes but excuse it as 'not really smoking'.

You know it's only a matter of time before you find yourself buying a pack. Ask your friends not to give you cigarettes, no matter what.

Long after stopping smoking, you start to wonder what one cigarette would be like.

Once you've been dependent, one cigarette even after a long time has a very powerful effect on the brain and can awaken an old desire to smoke regularly. Distract yourself and move on. You don't need cigarettes.

TRY THIS

- › Remember, every craving only lasts a few minutes. Use the 4Ds:



delay



**deep
breathe**



**drink water
or**



**do something
else**

- › Remind yourself of how far you have come. Do you really want to have to start all over again?
- › List your reasons for quitting on a card that you can carry with you. Read the reasons whenever you feel the urge to smoke.
- › Reward yourself for staying stopped. Do things you enjoy.
- › Have you found replacements for all the things you used cigarettes for? Think of what you can do to enjoy life without cigarettes.

If you smoke one or some cigarettes

Don't let one cigarette lead you back to full-time smoking. Think of all the times you have not smoked and say to yourself: 'I'm determined to quit. This is just a moment – I can move on. I know I can do this.'

Get rid of your cigarettes, plan for the rest of the day (and tomorrow) and remember the 4Ds (delay, deep breathe, drink water, do something else).

Look at *My quit plan* and make changes if you need to. For more help, call **Quitline on 13 7848**.

Watch out for warning signs. Get help from Quitline 13 7848 if things start to go wrong.

Learning from the times you smoke

'I gave in to constant, strong cravings or felt restless and cranky.'

Prescribed stop smoking tablets or nicotine patches, lozenges, gum, mouth spray or inhalator can take the edge off these cravings. If you are using these medications, check that you're using them correctly and, for nicotine lozenges, gum, mouth spray or inhalator, using enough.

'The whole thing got too scary and hard.'

The first week is often the hardest to get through. Plan for low and high moods and stressful situations. Knowing what to expect can really help.

'I started to smoke without realising it.'

Change your routine to lower your risk of triggers to smoke. Also, find a good replacement for cigarettes such as chewing gum, squeezing a stress ball or sipping from a water bottle.

'I was stressed out!'

It's best to plan ahead for stressful times. See pages 34 to 36 for ways to manage stress.

'I started smoking when I had a few drinks.'

Remember, the more alcohol you have, the more likely you are to end up smoking. For tips about alcohol see page 30.

'I allowed myself to have one and regretted it.'

See yourself as someone who doesn't need cigarettes and find something to keep your hands busy.

'I felt unable to say NO in the situation I was in.'

You have the right to refuse a cigarette and can do so without upsetting others. Find some good phrases: 'Please don't offer me a smoke, I'm quitting' or 'No thanks, I don't smoke'.

If you go back to regular smoking

Don't despair. Instead, think about what you can learn from your experience. What led you to smoke? What made it easier to quit?

Most people who have quit smoking for good have tried several times. It may take you a while to learn to be a non-smoker. Quitting smoking is a journey.

Although you may be feeling down, you should take pride in what you have achieved. Every day that you spent without cigarettes made your body healthier and helped to break your habit and weaken your dependence.

When to try quitting again

The best time to consider quitting again is when you feel like you're ready. But don't wait until the perfect time – it never comes.

TRY THIS

- › Make a note of what you learnt from your efforts to quit. What situations did you need to prepare for? What strategies worked best?
- › If you have made your home and car smokefree, keep them that way.
- › Call your Quitline counsellors on 13 7848. They understand that quitting for good can take a few tries. They won't judge you. They will discuss your experiences of quitting with you and offer help with what you decide to do next.

Quitting support and services



**"I'd tried to quit a few times,
and my friends didn't believe in
me. I rang Quitline whenever
I felt like I was going to smoke
and it made a huge difference."**

Quitline

Contact Quitline

Quitline is a welcoming, free and confidential counselling service. Quitline counsellors are experts at helping you gain the skills to break free from smoking for good. We will help you build and keep up your motivation to quit and help you create a quit plan that works for you. We listen carefully without judgement and will support you throughout your quit journey. Quitline counsellors can also support you if you are using vapes to stop smoking and can help you quit vaping.

There are many ways to contact Quitline:

- › Call **13 7848**
- › Ask Quitline to **call you back for free** at quit.org.au/callback
We'll call you back during Quitline hours: 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday.



There are more ways to contact Quitline including **webchat, WhatsApp** and **Messenger**.
Scan the QR code or visit quit.org.au/quitline

Quitline has worked with people in the LGBTIQ+ community to make Quitline a safe and inclusive space.

You can speak to Quitline in a language other than English. Call 13 7848 and tell us you need an interpreter. We will call you back with an interpreter in your language as soon as possible. We also use the [National Relay Service](#) for people with a hearing or speech impairment. Visit quit.org.au for more information.

Quit website

quit.org.au

Make your own plan to quit smoking or vaping with easy-to-find information suited to you. No matter how many times you've tried to quit, quit.org.au has tools and resources to help.

General support services

- › For crisis support contact Lifeline: lifeline.org.au (13 11 14)
- › For information on financial counselling:
moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/financial-counselling

Quitline for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Quitline services across Australia have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander counsellors who are ready to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who want to quit smoking or vaping. They can also support Community who are using vapes to quit the smokes.

To get culturally sensitive support to quit anywhere across Australia, call 13 7848 and ask to speak with a counsellor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

How does Quitline empower mob?

Quitline for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is for mob, by mob. Culture is at the centre of everything we do to help mob quit smoking or vaping for good.

We help by:

- › **yarning** with you and listening to you
- › helping you make a **tailored quit plan**
- › offering advice on how to **tackle cravings** and **withdrawals**
- › supporting you to **keep up your motivation** to quit and stay quit
- › working with your doctor, Aboriginal Health Worker or community liaison person to make sure you're getting all the support and care you need throughout your quit journey
- › offering advice on **how to support your loved ones** to quit.

You'll be deadily for giving us a call!

Ready to yarn about quitting?

When you're ready to yarn about quitting, call **13 7848** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm) and ask to speak with a counsellor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. That way we can link you in with the right service from the start. Or you can **fill out the callback form** at quit.org.au/callback and a counsellor will call you back as soon as possible.

Get a referral

If you prefer, speak with your doctor, Aboriginal Health Worker or community liaison person and ask for a referral. They'll get in touch with us, and we'll get in touch with you!

Your notes

uitline® 13 7848

Visit quit.org.au

Quit 13 7848 quit.org.au

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Please consult your health professional for further advice.



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