

## NEED MORE ADVICE?

If you'd like more advice or support, you can call the **National Smokers' Quitline on CallSave 1850 201 203**

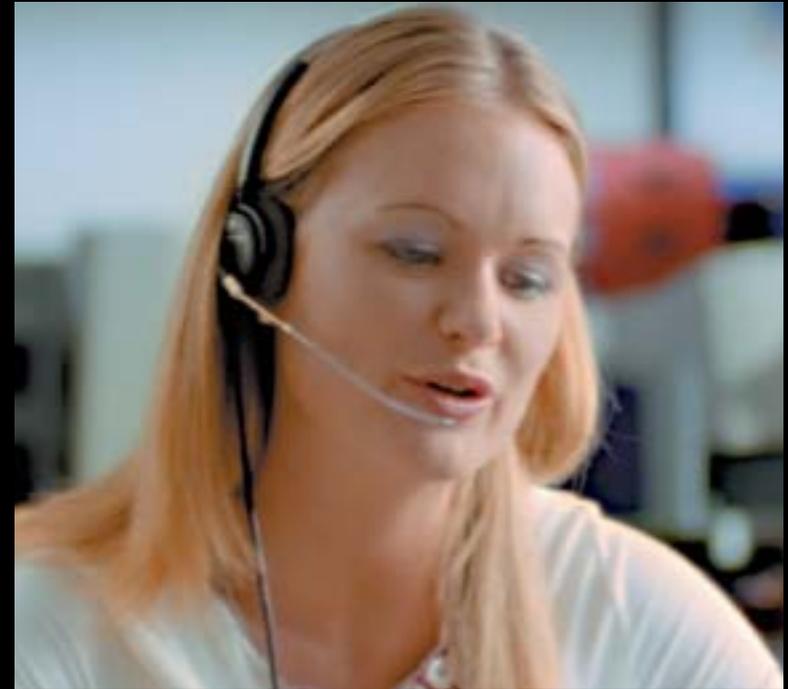
If you would like further personal support locally, call the National Smokers' Quitline and you will be put in touch with the Smoking Cessation Officer in your area.

You can also talk to your GP or Pharmacist or visit [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)

The National Smokers' Quitline is an initiative of the Health Promotion Unit at the Department of Health and Children, in partnership with the Irish Cancer Society.

 **HEALTH PROMOTION UNIT**  
[www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)

  
irish  
cancer  
society



# Quitting

Your positive and supportive  
guide to giving up smoking

 **HEALTH PROMOTION UNIT**  
[www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)

## INTRODUCTION

- If you are a smoker, quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health.
- If you are one of the 7 in 10 smokers who wants to stop, this booklet can help you to succeed.

## THE GOOD THINGS ABOUT QUITTING

Have a look at the benefits to you when you stop and remember, it's never too late to stop.



WHEN	WHAT
Straight away	You will have fresher breath, hair and clothes – smoking does smell.
Straight away	You will have more money in your pocket.
Within 20 minutes	Your blood pressure and pulse rates begin to return to normal.
Within 1 day	Risk of heart attack falls.
Within 2 days	You will have a better sense of taste and smell.
Within 3 days	You will feel fitter as you will not be as breathless as when you were smoking.
After 1 year	Risk of sudden death from a heart attack is almost cut in half. The risk from cancer is also reduced.

## 10 TIPS TO QUITTING

1. Prepare to Stop - Weigh up the pros and cons – write down your reasons for stopping and keep them close at hand.
2. Make a Date to Stop - And stick to it.
3. Support - Ask your family and friends for support.
4. Change your Routine and Plan Ahead - Replace or alter activities that you usually associate with smoking.
5. Be Active, Regularly - It's good for your health and helps you to manage stress.
6. Think Positive - You may have temporary withdrawal symptoms once you stop smoking. These are positive signs that your body is recovering from the harmful effects of smoking and will disappear once your body gets used to the change.
7. Learn to Deal with Cravings - Check out the tips for dealing with cravings on page 6.
8. Save Money - That you would otherwise have spent on tobacco.
9. Watch What You Eat - If you are worried about weight gain, be extra careful with your eating habits.
10. Take One Day At A Time - Remember, every day without smoking is good news for your health, your family and your pocket. If you slip-up, all is not lost. Set a new date and start again.

## SOME SMOKING FACTS

- Tobacco smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, including tar, which can cause cancer.
- Smoking can take 10-15 years off your potential life span.
- Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease and increases the risk of stroke.
- Smoking stains your teeth and fingers and is bad for your skin and complexion. It makes your breath smell.



## YOUR 3 POSITIVE STEPS TO GIVING UP

1. Preparing to Stop
2. Stopping
3. Staying Stopped

### STEP 1: PREPARING TO STOP

#### WEIGHING UP THE PROS AND CONS

One of the keys to successfully quitting smoking is wanting to stop. Once you have decided you want to stop, make a date to stop and stick to it.

**Be prepared:** It often helps to write down what you enjoy about smoking and compare this with why you want to stop.

Make a list about what you enjoy about smoking and why you want to stop! Keep this list close at hand to act as a reminder of why you want to give up.

WHAT I ENJOY ABOUT SMOKING e.g. It helps me to relax	WHY I WANT TO STOP SMOKING e.g. I worry about the damage to my health

**Every Cigarette is Doing You Damage.**

The sooner you give up the better for your health and well being.

## ARE YOU READY TO STOP?

You need to think carefully about why you're smoking. Look at the list below, are any of these you?



- **Smoking helps me cope**  
You didn't need cigarettes to cope before you started smoking.
- **I'm worried about withdrawal symptoms**  
Withdrawal symptoms are positive signs that your body is recovering from the harmful effect of smoking. Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can help (see page 10).
- **I don't want to put on weight**  
Not everybody does! Be active, watch what you eat and think about the positive benefits of quitting.
- **It's too late - the damage is probably done**  
Once you stop, the benefits start from day one.
- **This isn't the right time**  
You might think that there will never be a right time. Think positive.
- **I haven't got the will-power**  
Will-power just means wanting something badly enough. Ask yourself if you really want to stop and if so... go for it!

## DAILY SMOKING DIARY

It helps to think about your smoking pattern – the places or situations in which you smoke most heavily. Use this record sheet to help you.



NUMBER OF CIGARETTES SMOKED					WHERE ARE THE PLACES OR SITUATIONS IN WHICH YOU SMOKED MOST HEAVILY
DAY	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Total	
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

## STEP 2: STOPPING SMOKING

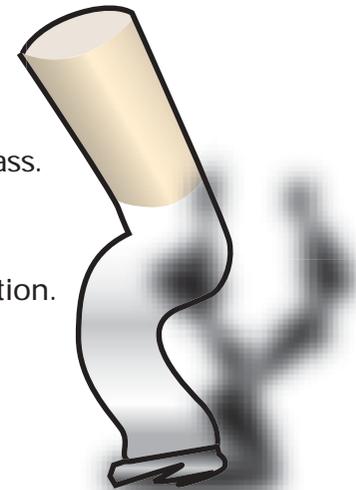
Pick a day to stop smoking. If necessary alter your daily routine at the start so you do not find yourself in situations where you will be tempted to smoke.

### TRY SOME OF THESE IDEAS TO HELP YOU QUIT

- If you like to smoke when you're chatting on the phone, remove the ashtray;
- If you enjoy a cigarette after a meal, brush your teeth or chew some sugar-free gum after eating, instead of lighting up;
- Being out in a smoking environment is often difficult if you're trying to quit. Try to socialise elsewhere for the first few weeks;
- If you're used to having a cigarette in your hands, find something else to hold, such as a pencil or stress balls;
- Be careful when drinking alcohol – a few drinks can make you forget you've given up smoking;
- Try drinking juice or water or eating fruit when you feel like having a cigarette. This will freshen your mouth and hopefully lower your craving. **Cravings only last 3-5 minutes at a time and they will pass;**
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can help double your chances of stopping (see page 10).

### TIPS FOR DEALING WITH CRAVINGS – THE 4 D'S

- **Delay** at least 3 - 5 minutes and the urge will pass.
- **Drink** a glass of water or fruit juice.
- **Distract** yourself. Move away from the situation.
- **Deep breathe.** Breathe slowly and deeply.



## SOME OF THE WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS YOU MAY EXPERIENCE

Not everyone gets withdrawal symptoms when they quit smoking. Withdrawal symptoms are positive signs that your body is recovering from the harmful effects of smoking. The symptoms will begin to fade as your body gets used to not smoking. It is quite normal to experience some of the symptoms listed below.

- A great desire or craving for a cigarette;
- Feeling extra sensitive;
- Feeling extra hungry;
- Coughing more and bringing up of phlegm;
- Tingling sensations in toes or fingers. Dizziness or being light-headed;
- Lack of concentration;
- Change in sleeping patterns.

## STEP 3: STAYING STOPPED

### TIPS FOR STAYING STOPPED

#### DO:

- Stay positive. When you feel tired and tempted to give in, remember how far you've come and why you stopped. Stay determined and the temptation will pass.
- Keep busy. Boredom can make smoking seem more important to you than it really is.
- Be active - a short walk, for example, will give you energy and help take your mind off cigarettes.
- Reward yourself... take a trip to the cinema!
- Be careful when drinking alcohol - it can affect your will-power.

#### DON'T:

- Don't give in by thinking "one cigarette won't hurt". This is just an excuse to have a cigarette. Don't give in.
- Don't be tempted to smoke with friends who smoke.

Many smokers slip-up before stopping for good. Think about the reasons you wanted to stop in the first place and prepare to stop again. Remember, that you are not alone as support is available. 7 out of 10 smokers want to quit. You can do it!

## SUPPORT FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS

You may want to stop smoking, but you cannot force others to quit. That's a decision they have to make for themselves. However you should look for support from family and friends when stopping. Family and friends can help by:

- Being positive and encouraging about the prospects of a smoke-free relationship. Nagging is neither helpful nor supportive;
- Encouraging other smokers not to smoke around you. Agree smoke-free spaces and replace smoking with beneficial activities such as walking, dancing or going to classes.
- Being supportive before, during and after you stop. This encourages long-term success.
- Let you know about programmes and methods that are available to help smokers stop.
- Praising and rewarding you for your efforts.

Smoking is addictive which is why it can be difficult to stop. If you are finding it difficult, help is available (see back of leaflet).



## NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPIES

Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRTs) can double your chance of success by helping you beat the craving for a cigarette. NRT is not a magic cure, but it will help reduce withdrawal symptoms and the cravings.

A wide range of Nicotine Replacement Therapy products are available on prescription and over the counter from your Pharmacist.

### NRT Treatments

- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum
- Nicotine Lozenges
- Nicotine Inhaler
- Nicotine Tablets



**For medical card holders, NRT is free of charge, when prescribed by your GP.**

Remember: Always read the instructions for all nicotine replacement therapies and use as directed.

Your Pharmacist, GP or local Smoking Cessation Officer can advise you about which one is best for you.

Remember, NRTs work best over 3-month periods, and you should try to stick to this to gain maximum benefit and the right result – to give up smoking for good!