



# PACK 'EM IN STAY TRIM



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## *Stop smoking and manage your weight*

There are many benefits to being a non-smoker. Your risk of getting heart disease, lung cancer and other smoking related illnesses is less. Breathing problems will gradually disappear and your circulation will improve. You will smell fresher and feel fitter. Also, you will be free from the worry that you are damaging your health.

You may worry that when you stop smoking you will put on weight. This booklet gives you some tips on how to stop smoking and manage your weight.

Some people gain weight when they stop smoking, however this is not always the case. Remember, smoking will affect your health far more than being a little overweight. If you do gain weight, work on losing it after you have become comfortable as a non-smoker.



## *Why might you gain weight when you stop smoking?*

The speed at which the body uses food for energy is called metabolism. Nicotine speeds up the body's metabolism. When you stop smoking your metabolism goes back to normal. Also, your digestive system is more efficient at absorbing nutrition from the food you eat. The average weight gain for someone who stops smoking is less than half a stone or 3.2 kilos.

Also, you may start to eat more because:

- Your appetite may increase
- Food tastes and smells better so eating is more enjoyable
- You may crave sweet foods
- A cigarette often marks the end of a meal, a second helping or dessert may replace it
- Food may become a substitute for cigarettes between meals or at the pub
- Cigarette breaks may turn into nibbling sessions

When deciding to stop smoking it is important to consider your eating habits. You may need to plan meals and snacks. Try not to replace cigarettes with food, in particular chocolate, biscuits, cakes, crisps and other high fat foods. Being physically active will also help you to manage your weight.



*Eat well and be active to manage your weight.*

**Enjoy eating well**

Follow a healthy balanced diet and be prepared in advance to handle cravings for sugary and high fat foods. Here are a few tips to help you.

**Do not go hungry**

- Plan ahead. Eat 3 meals everyday. Try not to skip meals, especially breakfast.
- Only snack if you are hungry and choose your snacks carefully.
- Eat slowly. Enjoy the increased flavour and textures of food.
- Include bread, cereals, pasta, rice (preferably wholemeal or brown varieties) or potatoes at each meal. They will satisfy your appetite and help fill you up.
- After a meal, fight that “unfinished feeling” with a low calorie ending such as fruit or diet yoghurt. During the first few days it may be easier to leave the table as soon as your meal is finished.



## *Snack sensibly*

When you first give up smoking you may feel that you want to snack and nibble all the time. Try not to eat unless you are hungry and then choose your snacks carefully. Some ideas for healthy low calorie snacks include:

- Fresh fruit
- Slice of bread or toast
- Natural yoghurt with fruit or “diet” yoghurt
- Crispbread or rice cakes
- Plain popcorn (unbuttered)
- Homemade vegetable soup
- Breakfast cereal with low fat milk.
- Sugar free chewing gum
- Raw vegetables such as celery or carrot sticks, slices of cucumber, pieces of red or green pepper.

### **Go for low fat**

Limit the amount of fat in your diet by avoiding fried and high fat foods such as chips, crisps, nuts, chocolate, cakes, biscuits and pastries. Processed foods such as sausages and puddings are also high in fat.



## *Keep a diary*

Keeping a food diary will help you identify the types of food you are eating and if you are overeating. It will also help you see what may be causing you to overeat.

### **Watch what you drink**

A non-alcoholic drink can often take the edge off your appetite and can also help you get over a craving for a cigarette. Some ideas include:

- Mineral or tap water
- Soda water and lime
- Tomato juice
- Sugar free squashes
- Diet minerals
- Low fat or skimmed milk
- Herbal or fruit teas
- Unsweetened fruit juice – dilute with mineral or soda water for a long drink

A cup of tea or coffee is often linked with smoking a cigarette. When you stop smoking it may be best to avoid these drinks for the first few days and try one of those listed above. This is only for a short while. You will soon be able to get back to your normal routine.



*Remember, only eat if you are hungry,  
not to replace smoking.*

Replace smoking with other activities. Keep your hands busy with activities like doodling, working puzzles, knitting or holding a pen or pencil.

### **Alcohol**

Remember

- Alcohol is high in calories and may make you want to snack.
- It can also reduce your will power, and increase the chances of you smoking or snacking.

It may be easier to give alcohol a miss the first few weeks or at least until you get used to being a non-smoker.



## *Enjoy being active*

Taking up regular physical exercise will give you a greater chance of managing your weight. Exercise will help you feel good, relieve stress and keep your body in good working order. It will also help distract you from thinking about food and cigarettes.

### **Ready, Steady, Go**

- Start slowly with 10 – 15 minutes of physical activity 3 to 4 times a week. Gradually build up to 30 minutes a day, most days of the week.
- Always exercise at a pace that suits you.
- Include physical activity in your daily routine, for example a 10-minute walk to work and a 20-minute swim at lunchtime.
- Two or three short sessions of physical activity can be used to meet your goal of 30 minutes a day.

**Remember!** If you have any medical problems or other concerns always check with your doctor before you start any new activity.



### *What type of activity?*

#### **Walking**

It is cheap, fun and enjoyable and can be done anytime. Bring a friend along for company or listen to music.

#### **Cycling**

Builds up strength and is a great form of transport.

#### **Swimming**

One of the best forms of all round exercise. If you cannot swim, it is never too late to learn.

With the money you have saved, why not consider joining the local gym, tennis club, golf club?

Don't forget about gardening, dancing or even washing windows!



*Use this space to plan your healthy eating routine for the day*

**Breakfast**

**Mid-day meal**

**Evening meal**

If I feel hungry in between meals, I will choose one of the following healthy snacks:

To be more physically active I will (for example take a 20 minute walk at lunch time):

## *Beat the cravings*

When you stop smoking you may experience a craving or overwhelming desire to smoke. This is linked to the nicotine leaving your system and is a positive sign that your body is recovering.

**Remember that a craving only lasts for 3 – 5 minutes.**

**Tackle cravings with the 4 D's –**

**Delay** for at least 3 minutes. The urge will pass.

**Deep** breathe slowly.

**Distract** yourself by going for a walk, chewing sugar free gum, working a puzzle or phoning a friend.

**Drink** water or another non-alcoholic drink.



## Get support and encouragement

Support and encouragement from family, friends and other people can help you stop smoking.

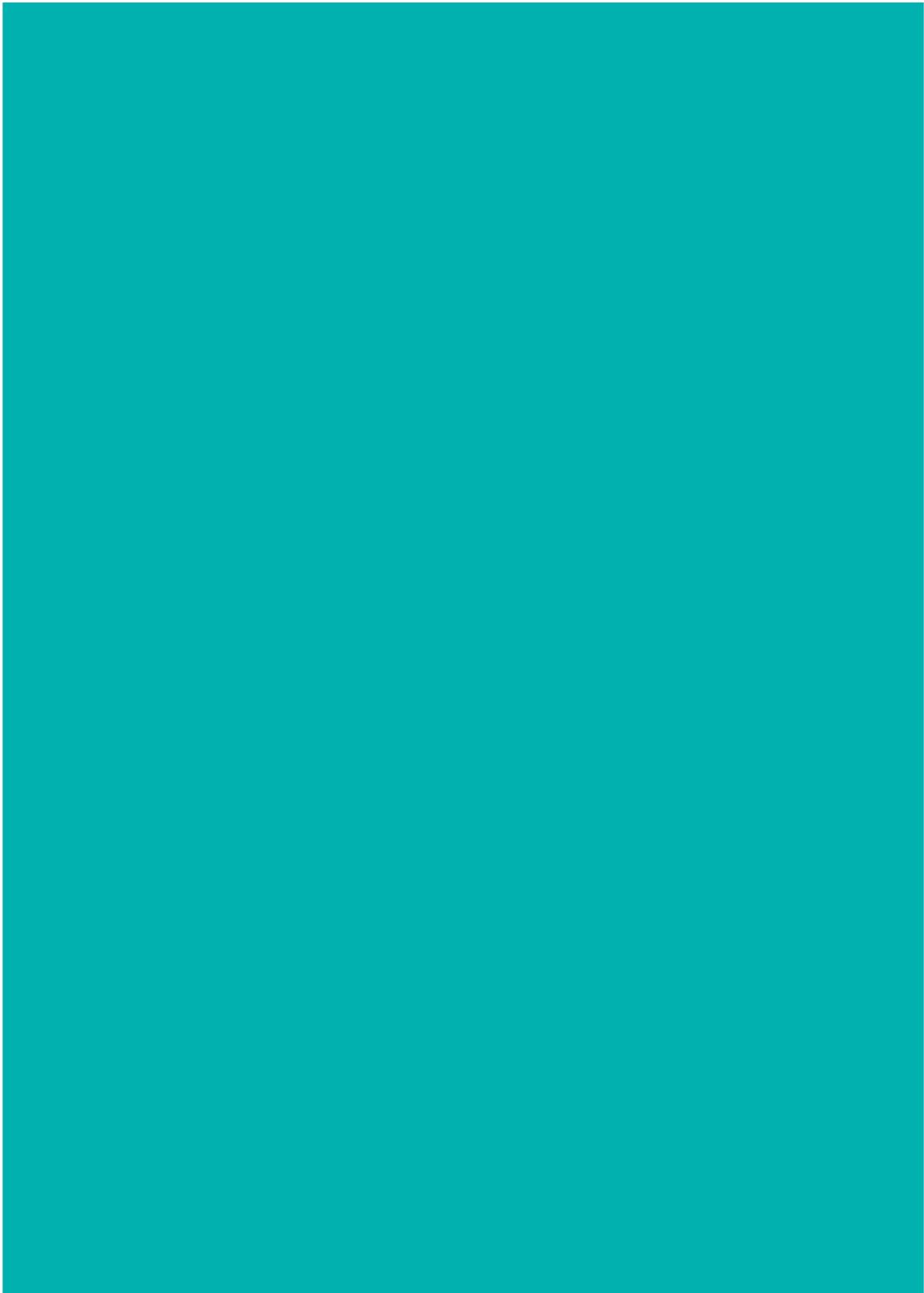
- Join a stop smoking support group (Contact your local Health Promotion Office for information)
- Talk to a friend when you get the urge to smoke
- If you can, find a friend to stop smoking with you for extra support
- Your family doctor or pharmacist will be able to advise you on stopping and on Nicotine Replacement Therapy.

Stopping smoking is the best thing that you can do for your health and the health of those around you.



*Well done, if you have stopped smoking!*





## Congratulations!

For further information and support contact –  
**The National Smokers Quitline - 1850 201203**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT



[www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)

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