

Refresh Yourself!

Stop Smoking



NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
NATIONAL HEART, LUNG, AND BLOOD INSTITUTE
AND OFFICE OF RESEARCH ON MINORITY HEALTH



Kicking the cigarette habit can be tough. Yet, many people like yourself have managed to break free from cigarettes. They were ready to quit and planned ahead to avoid cravings and temptations. And many people who have quit tried several times before they succeeded. You can stop smoking too! Join the growing number of African Americans who quit. This brochure offers tips that really work. Make a plan that works for you and stick to it. Congratulations on taking this important step to a healthy life.

When you stop smoking you:

- Lower your risk of:
 - Heart disease
 - Stroke
 - Cancer
 - Lung diseases like emphysema or bronchitis
 - Having unhealthy babies
- Improve your chances for a longer and healthier life.
- Have fresher smelling clothes, hair, and breath.
- Save the money you used to buy cigarettes.
- Stop hurting those around you. The secondhand smoke from your cigarettes can make your family and friends have more colds and asthma attacks. It can also put them at risk for heart and lung diseases.



Get started!

Pick a quit day within 2 to 4 weeks from today. This is the most important day of your life. Set a quit date now.

Celebrate the Healthier You!

I will quit on _____.
(date)

Before you quit:

- Tell your family, friends, coworkers, pastor, and congregation. Ask them for support and understanding.
- Write down the reasons you want to quit. Put a copy on the refrigerator where you will see it each day.
- Throw out all your cigarettes, lighters, and ash trays.
- Do not buy any more cigarettes.



Make a plan to stay off cigarettes:

- Stay away from other tobacco products, such as cigars, pipes, and chewing tobacco.
- At first, avoid places that make you want to smoke. Instead, plan to spend time where smoking is not allowed, like the library, movie theaters, church, department stores, or a museum.

- Review your past attempts to quit. Think about what worked and what did not.
- Reward yourself. Quitting can be hard work. Don't think of quitting as giving something up. Rather, think of it as gaining good health. Treat yourself to something special with the money you will be saving.
- Get other smokers in your household to join you in quitting.



Dodge the urge.

Try these healthier substitutes for smoking:

- To keep your hands busy: Draw, write, read the paper, knit, work crossword puzzles, polish your nails.
- Frustrated? Angry? Stressed out? Upset?: Relax, take a deep breath, walk away. Talk with someone close to you, walk outside, exercise, listen to music.
- When you first get up in the morning: Brush your teeth, use mouthwash, change your routine.

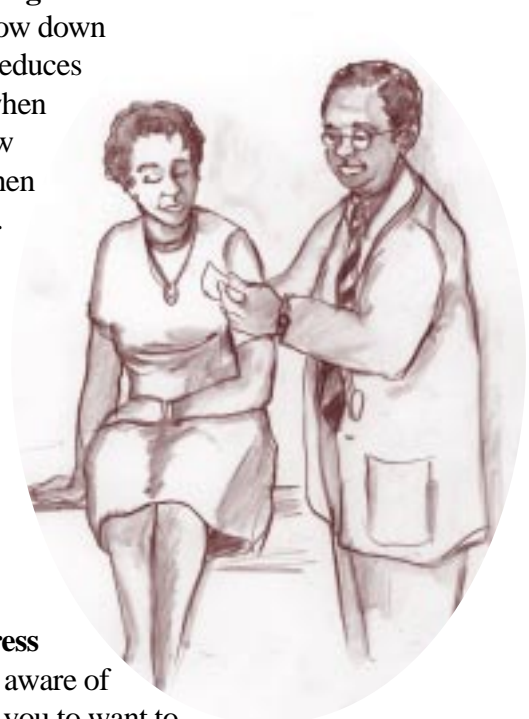


- While on the phone: Chew sugarless gum or drink water through a straw.
- After meals: Brush your teeth; call a friend; or sip a cup of hot tea.
- Going to a party or restaurant?: Do not order alcohol or fatty foods. Do chew gum; drink lots of water; after dinner try flavored tea instead of coffee.

The best ways to quit.

Use a combination of these three:

1. **Use the nicotine patch or gum.** The patch or the gum helps slow down the urge to smoke. This reduces the craving for nicotine when you stop smoking. Follow the package directions when you use the patch or gum. Ask your doctor for advice.
2. **Get support and encouragement.** You may want to join a quit smoking program. Seek advice from a health care provider.
3. **Learn how to handle stress and urges to smoke.** Be aware of the things that may cause you to want to smoke.



Be aware of temptations and slips

The nicotine in cigarettes is addictive. The first few weeks after you stop smoking are the most difficult ones. Your body goes through nicotine withdrawal. Stay focused. Soon you will be **SMOKE-FREE**. If you start smoking again, don't give up. Slips are a chance to learn, not to give up. It takes practice to quit. Keep trying!



Be the person you would like to be!

**Celebrate your success: 1 week,
1 month, 1 year at a time.**

- Keep a calendar and chart your success.
- Occasionally write down new reasons why you're glad you've quit.
- Use the money you have saved to buy something you've always wanted.





What about gaining weight?

Most people gain weight after quitting. While it is hard to change a lot of habits at one time, try going out for a walk after dinner. You'll avoid the urge to reach for a cigarette after you eat, and you'll get some exercise.





Save a life—Your own!

My three most important reasons for wanting to quit:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Two people I can call to help me:

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____



NATIONAL HEART,
LUNG, AND BLOOD
INSTITUTE



OFFICE OF RESEARCH
ON MINORITY HEALTH

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Public Health Service
National Institutes of Health
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
NIH Publication No. 97-4065
September 1997