

Smoking Cessation

Why Should I Quit Smoking?

Tobacco-use is the most common preventable cause of death. About half of people who don't quit smoking will die from tobacco-related problems, including:

- Cancer
- Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Cataracts
- Hip Fractures
- Asthma
- COPD

Immediate Benefits of Quitting

We all know that smoking cessation is good for you in the long run. But, did you know you can enjoy benefits within a couple days of your last cigarette? These include:

- Easier Breathing
- Lower Blood Pressure
- Clearer Skin
- Healthier Gums
- Better Sense of Taste
- Improved Sense of Smell
- Greater Physical Energy
- Financial Savings

How Can I Quit?

You are more likely to quit smoking if you get personal & professional help. You should consider telling your loved ones that you're quitting so they can provide emotional support. It can also be helpful to quit with a friend so you can motivate each other to overcome the challenges of smoking cessation. Ask your Counselor or Psychologist about behavioral coping strategies, and ask your Physician if these medicines might help:

- **Nicotine Replacement Therapies:** These include nicotine gums, patches, lozenges, inhalers & nasal sprays. Such over-the-counter products provide the nicotine you previously got from tobacco. Therefore, they help to reduce your cravings and can lessen the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.
- **Prescription Medicines (Bupropion & Varenicline):** These oral medications affect your brain chemistry in ways that can reduce nicotine cravings. They can be very effective, but they require a doctor's prescription. Consider making an appointment with your Physician right away.

Additional Resources

- **CDC:** https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/cessation/quitting
- **Medline Plus:** <https://medlineplus.gov/quittingsmoking.html>
- **American Lung Association:** <https://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/>
- **FDA:** <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/want-quit-smoking-fda-approved-products-can-help>

Why is it So Tough to Give Up Tobacco?

Most people who use tobacco - no matter the form - find it difficult to give up. Reasons vary from person to person, but common obstacles include:

- Physiological Addiction to Nicotine
- Use of Tobacco to Cope with Stress
- Lack of other Stress-Management Resources
- Development of Personal & Social Habits that Include Tobacco Use

Long-term Benefits of Quitting Tobacco

Your health can continue to improve for years after you quit by lowering your health risks, including:

- **Stroke:** Your risk of stroke is about the same as a nonsmoker roughly 3 years after you quit.
- **Heart Disease:** Within 2 to 3 years of quitting, your risk is similar to a person who never smoked.
- **Lung Cancer:** The risk of lung cancer is cut in half after 10 tobacco-free years.