

Four essential steps to help you quit smoking



Stopping smoking is one of the best choices you can make for your health. Take your first step towards quitting today!

The benefits of quitting smoking

Quitting smoking could be one of the best things you can do for your own long-term health – and for the people closest to you.¹



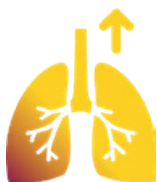
20 minutes after quitting

- Your heart rate and blood pressure drop.¹



12 hours after quitting

- Carbon monoxide levels in your blood drop to normal.¹



2 to 12 weeks after quitting

- Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.¹



1 to 9 months after quitting

- Coughing and shortness of breath decrease.¹



1 year after quitting

- Your risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.¹



5 years after quitting

- Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, oesophagus, and bladder is halved.¹



10 years after quitting

- Your risk of lung cancer is about half that of a smoker's.¹



15 years after quitting

- Your risk of coronary heart disease is the same as a non-smoker's.¹

Start your quitting journey using these four steps²

Always speak to your doctor when considering changes to your lifestyle.



Step 1: Set a goal to stop smoking

- Think about what you want to achieve by giving up smoking - all the benefits it could bring, such as improved breathing and better overall health for you and for those around you



Step 2: Set a date

- Choose a specific time and date to quit - and stick to it



Step 3: Avoid temptation

- When you get a craving, instead of having a cigarette, check with your doctor or pharmacist if a nicotine replacement product is right for you. There are chewing gums, oral sprays and skin-adhesive patches available at your local pharmacies and major supermarkets
- Try to get rid of anything that reminds you of smoking, such as ashtrays or lighters
- Ask other people not to smoke around you
- Try to hang around places where you are not allowed to smoke as 'protection' until a craving passes
- Change your routines that involve smoking – take all your normal breaks but have a cup of herbal tea instead of a cigarette or try cleaning your teeth straight after having a meal if this is the usual time you would have a cigarette
- Use other things to keep your mouth and hands busy – use a stress ball, keep some beads on you to fiddle with or chew sugar-free gum



Step 4: Reward yourself

- Rewards can be motivating - why not promise yourself a treat using the money you have saved from not buying cigarettes?

Help is available

The first, and often the hardest step is to decide you want to quit smoking. Once you come to that decision there are many different ways to help you achieve your goal.

- **Speak up** – Let your GP and pharmacist know about your decision to quit smoking and find out how they can help
- **Get your friends and family on board** – Make your support network aware of why you are quitting so they can encourage you
- **Seek advice** – Take advantage of free online resources that can help you make a plan and receive more information from a trusted source www.quit.org.nz
- **Use technology** - Download the Quit Guide app or Quit Smoking -QuitNow app.
- **Don't go it alone** – Find a group of likeminded people near you to share your journey with or call **Quitline** on 0800 778 778 24/7 or text on 4006.

References: **1.** World Health Organization. Tobacco: Health benefits of smoking cessation. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/tobacco-health-benefits-of-smoking-cessation> [Accessed March 2022]. **2.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Build your quit plan. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/quit-smoking/guide/quit-plan.html> [Accessed March 2022].

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