

## Helpful Hints for Quitters

These hints can help as you get ready to quit smoking:

**Pick a good (not perfect) day to quit.** Remember that the addicted brain can come up with countless reasons to delay quitting. Be smart. Don't try to quit in the middle of a very stressful event.

**Understand that quitting is not a one-size-fits-all treatment.** Symptoms vary among smokers and reasons to quit vary as well. Write down your real reason for quitting, such as for my kids, career or health.

**Consider self-help books, audio and videotape educational materials.** The American Lung Association and the American Cancer Society have numerous materials. Your local hospital will likely have a wellness department with these materials available. Also check for community support groups, 12-step programs as well as local churches and synagogues for support groups.

**Change your daily routines.** We are creatures of habit. The addicted brain takes cues from your surroundings. If you get up and have coffee and a cigarette in the same chair every morning, you will need to have your coffee somewhere else because the addicted brain will wonder what happened to the cigarette and craving will be triggered.

**Get exercise.** Instead of smoking after a meal take a walk with a friend or family member. This will help your sleeping as well.

**Take care of yourself.** Drink lots of water, eat a balanced diet and get enough sleep. If sleep problems persist after quitting, see your doctor.

**Find support.** Pick a team of family members and friends who care and tell them when you feel bad or are craving. Talking about your feelings lessens their power over you.

**Invest in quitting.** Paint the room where you smoke, clean the carpet or detail your car to get the smell of smoke out. This investment of money and time will reinforce your resolve to follow through. Some quitters put the money they save in a glass jar or fish bowl in plain view. A two-pack-a-day smoker can save \$240 in one month.

**Remember to express your feelings.** Quitting is a very emotional experience for most smokers. Feelings of fear, sadness, anger and grief are common. Many smokers experience significant grief and sense of loss when they quit. Cigarettes have been a reliable friend and ex-smokers frequently mourn the loss of pleasure brought on by smoking and the camaraderie they enjoyed with other smokers. Make a list of people you can talk to or do something with when you are hurting.

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