

## Information

If you smoke, you should quit. But quitting can be hard. Most people who have quit smoking have tried at least once, and often several times, without long-term success in the past. View any past attempts to quit as a learning experience, not a failure.

There are many reasons to quit using tobacco. Long-term use of tobacco can increase your [risk of many serious health problems](#).

### THE BENEFITS OF QUITTING

You may enjoy the following when you quit smoking.

- Your breath, clothes, and hair will smell better.
- Your sense of smell will return. Food will taste better.
- Your fingers and fingernails will slowly appear less yellow.
- Your stained teeth may slowly become whiter.
- Your children will be healthier and will be less likely to start smoking.
- It will be easier and cheaper to find an apartment or hotel room.
- You may have an easier time getting a job.
- Friends may be more willing to be in your car or home.
- It may be easier to socialize. Many people do not smoke and do not like to be around people who smoke.
- You will save money. If you smoke a pack a day, you spend about \$2000 a year on cigarettes.

### HEALTH BENEFITS

Some health benefits begin almost immediately. Every week, month, and year without tobacco further improves your health.

- Within 20 minutes of quitting: Your blood pressure and heart rate drop to normal.
- Within 12 hours of quitting: Your blood carbon monoxide level drops to normal.
- Within 2 weeks to 3 months of quitting: Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.
- Within 1 to 9 months of quitting: Coughing and shortness of breath decrease. Your lungs and airways are more able to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection.
- Within 1 year of quitting: Your risk of [coronary heart disease](#) is half that of someone still using tobacco. Your heart attack risk drops dramatically.
- Within 5 years of quitting: Your risk of mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder cancers are reduced by half. [Cervical cancer](#) risk falls to that of a non-smoker. Your stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2 to 5 years.
- Within 10 years of quitting: Your risk of dying from lung cancer is about one half that of a person who still smokes.
- Within 15 years of quitting: Your risk of coronary heart disease is the same as that of a non-smoker.

Other health benefits of quitting smoking include:

- Lower chance of [blood clots](#) in the legs, which may travel to the lungs
- Lower risk of erectile dysfunction

- Fewer problems during pregnancy, such as babies born at low birth weight, premature labor, miscarriage, and cleft lip
- Lower risk of infertility due to damaged sperm
- Healthier teeth, gums, and skin

Infants and children who you live with will have:

- [Asthma](#) that is easier to control
- Fewer visits to the emergency room
- Fewer colds, [ear infections](#), and pneumonia episodes
- Reduced risk of [sudden infant death syndrome](#) (SIDS)

#### MAKING THE DECISION

Like any addiction, quitting tobacco is difficult, especially if you do it alone. There are a lot of [ways to quit smoking](#) and many resources to help you. Talk to your health care provider about nicotine replacement therapy and smoking cessation medicines.

If you join [smoking cessation programs](#), you have a much better chance of success. Such programs are offered by hospitals, health departments, community centers, and work sites.