

# About Smoking



It's hard work to quit smoking. It usually takes more than one try. Learn more about the health risks of smoking, why it's so difficult to quit, and how your health will improve when you do finally quit for good.

## GET SOME FACTS



Smoking damages almost every organ in your body and can lead to chronic lung diseases, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and multiple types of cancer.

10x

Smoking is the **#1** cause of cancer in the United States. It **increases a smoker's risk** of developing cancer up to 10 times more than in a person who never smoked.



Smoking causes almost **half-a-million deaths** each year in the United States.



Smoking also causes **1 in 4 deaths** due to heart disease and stroke.

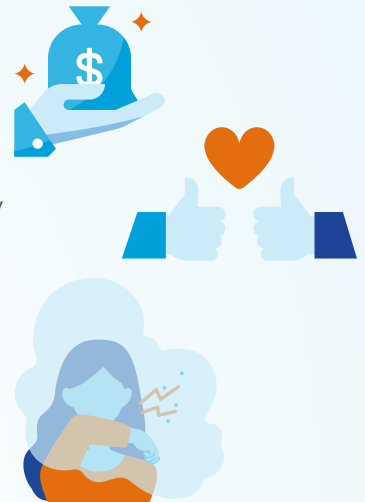
Regardless of your age or how long you've been smoking, one of the best things you can do for your health is to quit smoking.

## KNOW WHY YOU WANT TO QUIT

Knowing why you want to quit smoking can help you quit. What are your personal reasons? Write them down and read them.

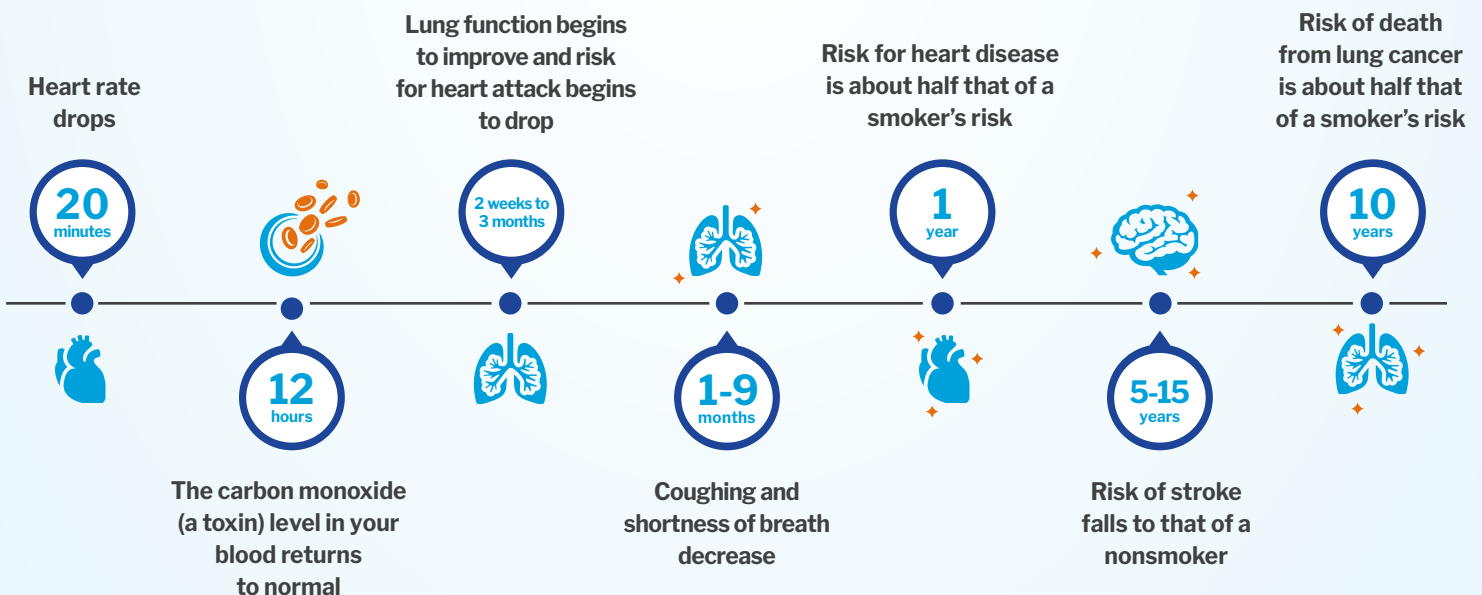
### Some examples:

- I will lower my risk of cancer and other diseases
- Not buying cigarettes means I will have extra money
- My friends and family will be proud of me
- I will reduce secondhand smoke and its risk to others



## A TIMELINE TO BETTER HEALTH

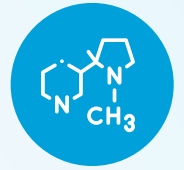
### After quitting for...



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## NICOTINE ADDICTION

Nicotine is the addictive substance found in tobacco products that keeps you smoking. Nicotine tricks your brain into releasing chemicals that make you feel calm, happy, and alert. It can make you feel good for a short time, but when it starts to wear off, it can make you want to reach for another cigarette and another. Soon, you start to feel bad if you *haven't* smoked. This is nicotine addiction.



In addition to the **physical** addiction, you become used to smoking in certain places or while doing certain things. These **mental** addictions are also hard habits to break.

It will take time and patience to overcome the challenges of nicotine addiction, but you *can* quit for good.

## KNOW THE CHALLENGES



You may experience physical and emotional discomfort called **withdrawal symptoms**



You may have cravings to smoke again, especially when you're feeling stressed or upset



You may have to mix up your daily routine and avoid things that remind you of smoking



You may need counseling, medication, or both to stop smoking and stay nicotine free

## KNOW YOUR OPTIONS FOR QUITTING

Quitting isn't easy. Success depends on how addicted you are to nicotine and how willing you are to quit. Fewer than **5%** of smokers can quit "cold turkey," but there are many other quit methods to choose from.

### Individual counseling and group support

Smokers who participate in counseling are more likely to quit than those who don't. Counselors provide the tools and training that can help you overcome the challenges of quitting. You can try individual counseling or group treatment to see what suits you best.

### Quitlines

Smokers also increase their chances of quitting when they make use of quitlines. These free, phone-based programs pair you with a counselor who can provide helpful advice and materials. The National Cancer Institute has a Quitline at 1-877-44U-Quit (1-877-448-7848) and there is a National Quitline at 1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669).

### Over-the-counter and prescription medications

To help you manage withdrawal symptoms and cravings, some products contain small amounts of nicotine. Other products don't contain nicotine but may still help by reducing symptoms and smoking urges.

### 1+1=2

Using a combination of medication and counseling can more than **double your chances** of quitting successfully.



**Ask your doctor or other health care professional about ways to help you quit smoking, and take the first step towards a healthier, smoke-free life.**

**References:** 1. National Cancer Institute. Cigarette smoking: health risks and how to quit (PDQ®)-patient version. Updated January 3, 2020. Accessed October 8, 2020. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco/quit-smoking-pdq> 2. National Cancer Institute. Clearing the air: quit smoking today. Reprinted August 2011. Accessed October 8, 2020. <https://www.cancer.gov/publications/patient-education/clearing-the-air-pdf> 3. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Tobacco use. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed October 8, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/tobacco.htm> 4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Smoking cessation—the role of healthcare professionals and health systems. Accessed October 8, 2020. [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/2020-smoking-cessation/fact-sheets/pdfs/healthcare-professionals-health-systems-h.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2020-smoking-cessation/fact-sheets/pdfs/healthcare-professionals-health-systems-h.pdf)

This information does not replace regular medical checkups or your health care provider's advice. Consult your health care provider about what is best for your personal health.