

## When you quit smoking, what are the health benefits?

### AFTER 20 MINUTES

Your blood pressure and heart rate drop.

### AFTER 12 HOURS

The carbon monoxide level in your blood returns to normal.

### 2 WEEKS TO 3 MONTHS

Your lung function increases and your circulation improves.

### 1 TO 9 MONTHS

Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; the cilia in your lungs start to regain their normal function of pushing mucus out of the lungs, increasing resistance to infection and the ability to deal with mucus.

### 1 YEAR AFTER QUITTING

The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half of what it would have been if you continued smoking.

### 5 YEARS AFTER QUITTING

Risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus and bladder are cut in half. Cervical cancer risk is the same as a non-smoker. Stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2-5 years.

### 10 YEARS AFTER QUITTING

The risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking. The risk of cancer of the larynx and pancreas lessens.

### 15 YEARS AFTER QUITTING

The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker.

Source: American Cancer Society

## Resources

### [LiveTobaccoFreeAustin.org](http://LiveTobaccoFreeAustin.org)

An Austin-based resource listing local smoking cessation programs and services.

### [YesQuit.org](http://YesQuit.org)

A program with multiple approaches from the Texas Department of State Health Services and the American Cancer Society.

### [Tips From Former Smokers](http://Tips From Former Smokers)

This CDC campaign website features stories from former smokers and information about quitting.

### [1-800-QUIT-NOW](http://1-800-QUIT-NOW)

A free, phone-based service with educational materials, coaches, a quit plan, and referrals to local resources to help you quit tobacco use.

### [1-855-DÉJALO-YA \(1-855-335-3569\)](http://1-855-DÉJALO-YA (1-855-335-3569))

A free, phone-based service to help Spanish-speakers quit tobacco use.

### [BeTobaccoFree.gov](http://BeTobaccoFree.gov)

This HHS Web site provides one-stop access to tobacco-related information, including information on quitting tobacco use, from its various agencies.

### [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov)

A Web site that provides free information and assistance to help you quit smoking and stay tobacco-free.

### [smokefree.gov \(en Español\)](http://smokefree.gov (en Español))

A Spanish-language website that provides free information and assistance to help you quit smoking and stay tobacco-free.

### [Quit Tobacco—Make Everyone Proud](http://Quit Tobacco—Make Everyone Proud)

A DOD-sponsored Web site for military personnel and their families.

The American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association and the American Lung Association also have smoking cessation programs on their websites.

# The best way to avoid lung cancer is to quit smoking.

*Information to help you quit now*



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## Reasons to quit

### SAVE MONEY

Even if a pack of cigarettes costs only \$5, smoking a pack a day adds up to \$1825 per year.

### TOO MUCH BOTHER

It used to be that you could smoke anywhere, even on an airplane. Now, as more states and cities pass clean air laws, it's hard to find a place to smoke. When you do, you may have to endure the weather, be it too hot or too cold. Wouldn't it be great not to worry about all that?

### PROTECT THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU

Cigarette smoke can harm everyone who inhales it. Secondhand smoke is dangerous. Children who live with smokers get more chest colds and ear infections. When you quit, everyone breathes easier.

### AND MORE ...

Fresher smelling clothes, hair and home; better breath; a sharper sense of smell and taste; more energy—there are so many benefits that come with quitting.

Source: American Lung Association

## Make a plan.

An important part of quitting successfully is to make a quit plan. Here are some suggestions:

### SET A DATE

Circle the date on the calendar that you plan to quit. Pick a low-stress day when you think you will be able to avoid situations where you have normally smoked, such as during work breaks or on a night out with friends.

### LET YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY KNOW

Your support group will be important while you are quitting. Let them know ahead of time exactly how they can help.

### GET RID OF REMINDERS OF SMOKING

Collect all your cigarettes, ashtrays, lighters and anything else that is associated with smoking in your life and get rid of them. Clean and air out your house and car. On the day you quit, throw away your cigarettes.

### KNOW WHY YOU ARE QUITTING

Make a list of all the reasons you want to quit smoking. That can include your health and the health of your family, saving money, fresher clothes—anything that inspires you to stay away from cigarettes.

### IDENTIFY YOUR SMOKING TRIGGERS

Smoking is part of your life and becomes associated with certain activities, people and feelings. As you prepare to quit, pay attention to what exactly triggers your smoking and how you will deal with the situation or craving when it occurs.

### BUILD COPING STRATEGIES

Withdrawal from nicotine can be unpleasant, causing anxiety, sleep issues, irritability and more. Medications, phone apps, support groups, and websites can help while the withdrawal symptoms and cravings fade.

Source: [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov)

## Beat the cravings.

Quitting can be tough. Be ready when the urge to smoke comes on with some proven techniques:

### WHEN DO YOU WANT TO SMOKE?

Knowing what situations or feelings make you want to smoke helps you stay in control. Here are some common triggers: feeling stressed, feeling down, talking on the phone, drinking alcohol, watching TV, driving, finishing a meal, taking a work break, going to a bar, seeing someone else smoke, having a stressful encounter with someone, feeling lonely, after having sex and drinking coffee. Make a list of your specific triggers.

### PLAN HOW TO HANDLE THE CRAVINGS

Since you can't avoid all triggers, make a plan for what you will do when they come up. Cravings usually last about 5 to 10 minutes so try to wait it out. Have a list handy of things you can do to distract yourself, including:

**Call or text someone.** Here's where you call in your support group. Contact a trusted friend or family member.

**Wait 15 minutes.** Read, play a game or listen to music for 15 minutes until the craving passes.

**Take a walking break.** Physical activity can help pass time and beat a craving. Try taking a walk, climbing stairs or walking around your workplace.

**Remember why you quit.** Review your reasons for quitting and why you want to be smoke free.

**Go someplace you can't smoke.** Go to a movie, a restaurant or any other place where you are forced not to smoke.

**Total up your savings.** Reinforce your resolve by calculating how much you have saved on cigarettes.

**Keep your mouth busy.** Have gum or hard candy at hand or get a drink of water.

**Change your activity.** Don't just sit there focusing on your craving. Do something different or change your routine.

**Deep breathing.** Inhale through your mouth and exhale through your nose until you feel more relaxed.