



Quit Smoking This Month

CHALLENGE
Cut back and quit smoking this month.

Requirements to Complete this WELLNESS CHALLENGE

1. *Keep a written record of how many cigarettes, cigars, pipes you smoke each day.*
2. *Read “Deciding to quit” below.*
3. *To complete the Challenge, do not smoke for at least 22 days this month—preferably the last 22.*
4. *Keep records of your completed Challenge in case your organization requires documentation.*

Deciding to quit

Cigarette smoking is related to CHD risk, high blood pressure, and stroke in addition to lung cancer. Research shows that stopping makes a significant difference. Risk begins to drop immediately after quitting. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 1 year after quitting, the risk of coronary heart disease decreases by 50%. In the Framingham Heart Study the risk for stroke dropped nearly to that of lifetime nonsmokers within 5 years of quitting. Stopping smoking is a key step in preventing coronary heart disease.

Most smokers (about 70%) want to quit completely and half of these try each year. While it may not be easy, you can stop. More than 44 million Americans have stopped smoking, and if they did it, you can too!

Most people who have stopped tried several times before being successful. If you didn't make it on your last try, don't get discouraged. This time may be your successful attempt.

New treatments are available that can more than double your chances of quitting successfully.

SMOKING RELATED DISASTERS	INCREASED RISK
Heart disease	2-3 times
Stroke	2 times
Lung cancer	10-20 times
Cancer of the mouth	12 times
Larynx cancer	17 times
Esophagus cancer	5 times
Bladder cancer	2.8 times
Pancreatic cancer	3.6 times
Kidney cancer	1.7 times
Stomach cancer	1.7 times
Emphysema	8 times
Bronchitis	12 times
Flu and pneumonia	2.2 times
Stomach ulcers	4.9 times
Cirrhosis	2.5 times
Spontaneous abortion	1.3 times
Sudden infant death (if a parent smokes)	1.5 times

Source: U.S. surgeon General's Report, Smoking and Health

If you are ready to stop smoking, review the guidelines in the section entitled, “10 steps to successful quitting.” Discuss these guidelines with your physician and ask for additional help and guidance if needed. If you are not ready to stop at this time, consider the brief summary listed below, “Benefits of quitting.”

Benefits of quitting

Begin thinking about the advantages of quitting

- **Less cancer.** Smoking is strongly related to cancer of the lungs, mouth, bladder, kidney, and pancreas. Smoking causes 1/3 of all cancer deaths.
- **Less heart disease and stroke.** Once you quit smoking, HDL cholesterol levels improve, blood pressure goes down, and there is less damage to the artery walls from carbon monoxide in the blood.
- **Fewer wrinkles.** Smoking is a major cause of wrinkles in later life.
- **Sexier.** Your breath is fresher, teeth are not stained, and you smell better. In men, smoking increases risk of impotence.
- **Financially better off.** It's not only the money you'll save from not buying cigarettes (figure it out, the number of packs/day times 365 days a year) but also higher medical expenses. For every pack smoked it costs \$3.90 for additional medical expenses caused from smoking.
- **Live years longer** to enjoy your grandchildren. Studies show that for every cigarette smoked you lose 11 minutes of life expectancy.
- **Have fewer colds.** Be sick less often, enjoy better health, and be more fit.
- **Stronger bones.** Smoking increases the risk of osteoporosis in both men and women.
- **Happier.** Smokers experience more depression than nonsmokers.
- **Reduce fire danger.** Each year smoking causes 200,000 fires, \$300,000,000 in property damage, and 1,000 deaths.
- **Be in control** of your life instead of letting tobacco control you.

- **Don't harm other's health.** Nonsmoking spouses who live with smokers have at least a 30% increased risk of lung cancer compared to spouses living with nonsmokers. Smoking increases health hazards for unborn children, sudden death in infants, and allergy and respiratory infections in young children.
- **Be a positive role model.** What we do speaks louder than what we say. Take pride in setting a good example as a nonsmoker.

10 Steps to successful quitting

- 1. Get help and support from your doctor.** He or she can advise you on medicines and/or nicotine replacement therapies and make your plan to quit much more likely to succeed.
- 2. Set a quit date.** Ideally, this should be within 2 weeks of the time you visit your doctor. Tell your family, friends, and coworkers your plans and your quit date, and ask for their understanding and support. Quitting is more difficult if there are other smokers around. If you can, quit together. If not, ask other smokers in your house and office not to smoke in your presence.

Remove all tobacco products from your home and work environment. Avoid smoking in places where you spend a lot of time (your office, home, or car.) Begin breaking the habit of wanting to smoke when you have certain experiences such as when you sit in a specific chair or when driving.

Write out your reasons for wanting to quit (health concerns, family, improved fitness, etc.). Review these reasons daily when first quitting. Have your teeth cleaned the week you stop.

Try to keep major deadlines and pressures at a minimum the first week or two when you are quitting.

- 3. On your quit date, STOP!** It's best to quit cold turkey, not even 1 puff after the quit date. Even 1 puff will make quitting more difficult. Should you slip and smoke 1 cigarette, don't give up. Make tomorrow a smoke free day.

Since alcohol reduces your resolve to quit it's best to avoid all alcohol when trying to quit. If you want to smoke every time you have a cup of coffee, you may want to avoid coffee or try another hot drink.

Anticipate roadblocks and plan how to handle these situations such as how to cope with withdrawal symptoms (e.g., using nicotine replacement therapy), and fear of weight gain (replace smoking with an active lifestyle and eating more healthfully). Ask your friends, doctor, or smoking counselor for tips and suggestions.

Get extra rest. Eat simply and healthfully (lots of fruits, vegetables, and water) but avoid dieting while stopping. Take lots of walks in the open air. Physical

activity is especially helpful for women who are stopping. Keep busy in the evenings and weekend with activities you enjoy.

- 4. Make a "survival kit"** to keep near you the first few days. Oral satisfaction can be derived from chewing gum, holding a tooth pick in your mouth, munching on carrot sticks and celery, or sucking on a mint or red-hot candy. Keep you fingers busy with a pencil, rubber band, or a rubber squeeze ball.

- 5. Start a list of personal benefits** you receive from stopping (feel better, food tastes better, less winded when exercising, and feel better about yourself). Make this an ongoing list.

- 6. Get social support.** Join a stop smoking class or group. The instruction and support can be helpful. Find someone you can call and talk to when smoking urges get really strong. Check in with your support person regularly. Reporting to someone helps your resolve. Discuss those things that make you want to smoke and how to handle them.

- 7. Use of approved pharmacotherapy.** Several drugs have been shown to be effective in reducing withdrawal symptoms and increasing success in quitting. Discuss the use of these therapies with your doctor.

- 8. Reward your progress.** Set short-term goals and rewards as well as longer-term goals and rewards. For example, if you stop for a week, buy a new outfit or CD. When you've remained stopped for 6 months, take a special vacation. Pay for it with the money you saved by not buying cigarettes.

- 9. Follow-up contact with doctor.** Visit your doctor within a week of your stop date and then again at least a month after stopping. Discuss any difficulties you are having. If necessary, explore more intensive treatment programs with your doctor.

- 10. Guard against discouragement.** Many people go back to smoking if they are discouraged. Plan what you would do if you have a crisis in your life. Social support and help from your doctor in a crisis can be very helpful. Don't tempt yourself. Plan for long-term success. Replace smoking with other activities. Continue your commitment to a healthier you. Tell others about the benefits of quitting. Help others see the benefits of never starting, but don't preach. By encouraging others, you strengthen your own resolve.

References:

- American Heart Association, Heart and Stroke Statistical Update, 2002*
- American Cancer Society, Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Facts and Figures, 2002*
- National Cholesterol Education Program, ATP 3 Report, 2001*



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Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record your smoking/nonsmoking each day. If you smoke one day, start being smoke-free again the next day.
3. At the end of the month, total the number of days you were smoke-free. You must meet this goal at least 22 days during the month to complete the Challenge. Hopefully this will be the first 22 days of a life of being smoke-free.
4. Enter your completion of the Wellness Challenge on your Health Activity Tracker report for the month. Keep this record for evidence of completion.

MONTH:

WC = Wellness Challenge • ex. min. = exercise minutes

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary
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_____ Number of days this month I was smoke-free.

_____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Signature _____ Date _____

