

# Smoking



Smoking is very dangerous to your health. Quitting will cut your risk of dying from heart disease, blood vessel disease, lung problems, cancer, and stroke. Talk to your healthcare provider about quitting. There are many resources, like classes, support groups, medicines, and other quit aids. It is not easy to stop smoking, but it can be done. Often, it takes many tries before people can quit for good. Quitting will help you live a healthier and longer life.

## Getting Ready to Quit

Follow these tips to get ready to quit:

- Cut down the number of cigarettes you smoke each day.
  - Smoke only half a cigarette each time.
  - Smoke only during the even hours of the day.
- Clean out ashtrays and start putting them away one by one. Clean the drapes, the car, your office, or anything else that smells of tobacco smoke.
- Get support
  - Tell your family and friends about your plan to quit and ask for their help.
  - Convince a friend or spouse to quit with you.
- Start exercising before you quit.
- Switch to a brand of cigarettes you do not like as much.
- Throw away spare lighters.
- If you like to smoke with other people, start smoking alone.
- Become aware of why you smoke each cigarette. Avoid the things that cause you to smoke.
- Make a list of your Top 5 Reasons for Quitting. Read this list daily.



- Pick a date to quit and slowly reduce your smoking until your quit date. On your quit date, stop completely. If you smoke a lot at work, quit during a vacation.

## The Day You Quit

- Throw away your cigarettes, lighters, and ashtrays.
- Make plans for the day and keep busy. Spend time in places where smoking is not allowed, such as a library or the movies. Change your routine.
- Drink water, up to 8 cups. This will help to remove chemicals from your body.
- Keep celery, sugarless gum, hard candy, straws, or toothpicks handy to help meet the urge of something in your mouth.
- Try to relax. Take deep breaths when you are anxious. Repeat your "Top 5 Reasons for Quitting" list out loud or in your head.
- Get at least 30 minutes of physical activity.
- Eat regular and healthy meals.
- Start a money jar with the money you save by not buying cigarettes. Every day, add the amount of money you would normally spend on cigarettes to the jar.
- Reward yourself at the end of the day for not smoking.

For more information call Customer Service at **(415) 615-4555**.

Or visit [www.healthysanfrancisco.org](http://www.healthysanfrancisco.org)

## Social Benefits of Quitting

- Quitting saves money. In California, a pack of cigarettes costs about \$5.50. Someone who smokes a pack a day will save over \$2,000.00 a year by quitting!
- Not smoking sets a good example for children and others.
- You will have more energy for the activities you enjoy.
- Your skin and hair will look and smell better.
- Not needing to take smoking breaks means you will have more time and freedom to do what you want during the day.

## Health Benefits of Quitting

Smoking damages nearly every organ in your body and puts you at risk for many serious health conditions. Fortunately when you quit smoking your body is still able to heal itself. In fact some of the healing processes happen very quickly.

## Things to Remember when Quitting

- It is hard to quit smoking. Most people try several times before they succeed.
- If you do smoke, do not give up on yourself. Remind yourself of how many hours, days or weeks you have already gotten through.
- Identify what triggers your desire to smoke. Practice what to do when you feel the urge to smoke.
- Remind yourself why you quit smoking.
- Reward yourself for your willpower and courage.

The **California Smokers' Helpline** is a great resource. It is a free telephone counseling program that can help you quit smoking. Their services are available in six languages. They can also give you information on classes, printed educational materials, and other resources. Call them today!

**1 (800) NO-BUTTS** (662-8887) or go to **www.nobutts.org**.

Sources:

"Living Tobacco Free" Association of Clinicians for the Underserved, <http://clinicians.org>

"How to Quit Smoking" [HealthInfoTranslations.org](http://www.smokefree.gov)  
[www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)

"Guide to Quitting Smoking" American Cancer Society, [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

National Cancer Institute, [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

Time After Last Cigarette	How Your Body Heals
20 minutes after quitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your blood pressure decreases</li> </ul>
12 hours after quitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your blood is able to carry more oxygen</li> </ul>
2 weeks to 3 months after quitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your lungs and circulatory system improve function</li> </ul>
1 to 9 months after quitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coughing and shortness of breath decrease</li> <li>• Your lungs are able to clean themselves better and reduce the risk of infection</li> </ul>
1 year after quitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker</li> </ul>
5 years after quitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, and bladder are cut in half</li> <li>• Your risk of stroke and cervical cancer (in women) falls to the level of a non-smoker</li> </ul>
10 years after quitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your risk of dying from lung cancer is half that of a smoker</li> </ul>
15 years after quitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your risk of coronary heart disease is equal to a non-smoker</li> </ul>

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