

## Smoking

### Preparing to Quit

Congratulations! You have made the decision to quit smoking. Quitting is hard. Here are some tips to help you stay on track.

### Avoiding Triggers

Awareness of a behavior is the first step in controlling or changing that behavior. A “trigger” can be thought of as a cue or signal to engage in a certain behavior. Keep a record of triggers and high risk situations for smoking. Knowing your triggers may prevent situations before they happen or help you better prepare and deal with them.

Triggers fall into 1 of 2 groups:

- **External Triggers:** taste, smell, visual stimuli, after meals, with coffee or alcohol, when meeting people, working, talking on the phone, celebrating, having a well-earned break
- **Internal Triggers:** mood (anxiety, anger, happiness, and stress), certain thoughts

To monitor a smoking pattern, keep track of your cigarettes and triggers on a **tracking sheet**.

The table below lists common triggers for smoking, possible reasons why it is a trigger and coping strategies to stop the craving and urge to smoke when you encounter that trigger.

Trigger	Possible Reason	Alternative Coping Strategies
Morning/waking up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Withdrawal symptoms</li><li>• Habit/something to start the day</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brush your teeth right after you get up</li><li>• Drink some orange juice</li><li>• Exercise</li></ul>
After meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relaxing</li><li>• Increases metabolism</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep your hands busy (such as washing dishes)</li><li>• Brush your teeth</li><li>• Take a walk</li></ul>
Tension/stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coping mechanism (stress/bad mood)</li><li>• Need a break</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exercise</li><li>• Practice deep breathing</li><li>• Take a warm bath</li></ul>
Driving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Boredom</li><li>• Coping with traffic stress</li><li>• Habit</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clean out ashtray</li><li>• Use “no smoking” reminders</li><li>• Chew gum/suck on peppermints</li><li>• Remove lighter</li></ul>

<b>Trigger</b>	<b>Possible Reason</b>	<b>Alternative Coping Strategies</b>
Bedtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habit</li> <li>• Relaxing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change nighttime routine</li> <li>• Drink warm milk to relax</li> <li>• Take a warm bath</li> </ul>
Empty hands/idle time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boredom</li> <li>• Habit</li> <li>• Restlessness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play with something in hands</li> <li>• Chew on toothpick</li> <li>• Work puzzles</li> <li>• Go for a walk</li> <li>• Doodle</li> <li>• Read</li> <li>• Call a friend</li> </ul>
Coffee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habit</li> <li>• Relaxing</li> <li>• Taste/smell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid or switch to decaf or tea</li> <li>• Change environment (such as drink coffee outside or in a non-smoking place)</li> </ul>
Phone calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restlessness</li> <li>• Habit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doodle</li> <li>• Play with something in your hands</li> </ul>
Writing/studying/reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentrating</li> <li>• Boredom</li> <li>• Habit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take breaks</li> <li>• Drink orange juice</li> <li>• Suck on peppermints</li> </ul>
Watching TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restlessness</li> <li>• Habit</li> <li>• Boredom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chew on a straw</li> <li>• Eat popcorn or hard candy</li> <li>• Drink juice</li> <li>• Sit in a different chair</li> <li>• Listen to music or the radio instead</li> </ul>
Being around other smokers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating</li> <li>• Socializing/other smokers</li> <li>• Relaxing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask them not to smoke around you</li> <li>• Leave and go somewhere else (temporarily or permanently)</li> <li>• Be assertive about how you are feeling</li> </ul>

### **Prepare Your Surroundings**

To help you quit, remove things from your home, office or car that remind you of smoking.

- Get rid of visual reminders to smoke such as ashtrays, lighters or matches in your home, office and car.
- Find and destroy “stray” cigarettes. Clean out coat pockets, kitchen drawers and your glove compartment.
- Set up visual reminders to not smoke, such as short notes posted around your home, car and/or work (“Smoking is not an option”).

Clean and deodorize where you live:

- Deodorize and clean carpets
- Wash curtains
- Wash your clothes
- Deodorize your furniture (such as with Febreze®)
- Air out rooms by opening windows
- Light scented candles
- Clean out your car

### **Prepare Your Body**

You may or may not have withdrawal symptoms. To handle any withdrawal symptoms you may have, it helps to get yourself physically prepared.

- Get a lot of rest. Your body is used to nicotine. It needs time to adjust to being without nicotine.
- Eat a balanced diet. Limit your fat intake and increase the amount of fruit and vegetables you eat each day.
- Think of this as a time for recovery.

### **Prepare Your Friends and Family**

Quitting can be much easier if you have support from friends and family.

- Remind family and friends of your quit date.
- If possible, avoid people who are critical of your efforts to quit smoking.
- Remind your co-workers of your quit date and ask them to be patient if you become more irritable.

### **Resources**

For more information on social support and help when quitting, ask your health care provider for a copy of the following:

- **Smoking: Support When Quitting**
- **Smoking: Strategies for Coping When Quitting**
- **Smoking: Tracking Sheet**