



# Everything you need to know to quit smoking

One of the leading causes of preventable illness and death in the U.S. is tobacco use. Smoking, and exposure to it, accounts for approximately 480,000 deaths each year.<sup>1</sup>

Although it's difficult to kick the habit, the benefits of quitting smoking can be significant, including:

- Improving night vision
- Lowering cholesterol
- Decreasing lung damage
- Decreasing skin blemishes and premature aging
- Strengthening muscles and bones
- Decreasing risk for cancer
- Decreasing heart risk
- Improving mental health
- Lowering chances of sexual dysfunction
- Lowering the risk of diabetes
- Preventing emphysema and COPD
- Strengthening the immune system

Quitting is tough and can take multiple attempts. Feeling discouraged is normal and it can be helpful to develop a quit plan. Here are some steps to include in your quit plan:

- Set a goal "quit date"
- Identify smoking triggers
- Get rid of smoking reminders
- Identify the reasons you want to quit
- Prepare what you can do to fight cravings
- Tell family and friends

Get extra help from resources like:

[SmokefreeTXT](#) | [QuitGuide phone app](#) | [1-800-QUIT-NOW \(1-800-784-8669\)](#)  
[LiveHelp chat with the National Cancer Institute](#)

1. SAMHSA, 2018.

For additional information, visit  
**Tobacco Cessation by SAMHSA**  
**Smokefree.gov**  
**BeTobaccoFree.gov**

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One method that you should consider is Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT). This therapy helps to reduce cravings and reduces urges by controlling the amount of nicotine a person receives, without the other chemicals that can be found in cigarettes.

### Patch

*Available over the counter*

Place on the skin. Gives a small and steady amount of nicotine.

### Gum

*Available over the counter*

Chew to release nicotine. Chew until you get a tingling feeling, then place between cheek and gums.

### Lozenge

*Available over the counter*

Place in the mouth like hard candy. Releases nicotine as it slowly dissolves in the mouth.

### Inhaler

*Available by prescription*

Cartridge attached to a mouthpiece. Inhaling through the mouthpieces gives a specific amount of nicotine.

### Nasal Spray

*Available by prescription*

Pump bottle containing nicotine. Put into nose and spray.

Alternatively, medications such as Bupropion (Zyban) or Chantix (Varenicline) can be prescribed to help you quit. These medications do not contain nicotine and do not work like other NRTs, but they help to decrease cravings and withdrawal symptoms.

If you are interested in kicking a smoking habit with any of these tools, speaks with your medical professional to find out what the best option is for you.

*Smokefree.gov. (2018). Retrieved from <https://smokefree.gov/>.  
SAMHSA. (2017). Tobacco. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/atod/tobacco>.*