

How to Stop Smoking

Introduction:

Smoking has been targeted as a major public health problem in the United States since 1979 when the US Public health service named it as the number one cause of preventable disease and early deaths in Americans. In 1982, the Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop, made the statement that smoking was "the most important public health issue of our time." Fortunately the public believed the information and data, and smoking has continually decreased during the last two decades, and thousands of people have successfully quit smoking. Still, there are millions of people who have continued to smoke, many who are long time hard-core smokers, and thousands of teenagers who begin to smoke each day.

For many years the cigarette manufacturers fought the data that cigarettes are harmful to your health while evidence increased that cigarettes were responsible for a high percentage of deaths from heart disease, lung cancer and emphysema. Now the manufacturers have been successfully sued by the various states to help compensate for the high cost of health care by the states for the treatment of diseases attributed to smoking. Taxes on cigarettes are being used for a wide variety of health care costs. Some of these taxes are also used in prevention campaigns aimed at encouraging young people not to start smoking.

Q&A

- Are you embarrassed and annoyed because your family and friends or your physician are always urging you to stop smoking?
- Are you worried about your health such as getting lung cancer or heart disease if you don't stop?
- Have you become discouraged because you have tried in the past and could not stop, or restarted after a short time?
- Do you think that you are so addicted that there is no hope for you?
- Are you determined to stop smoking now?

If you answered yes to *ANY* of the above questions and really would like to stop smoking, there are many things that you can do to stop. Many people have successfully quit on their own, while others have benefited from attending group programs that help with information and encouraging tips. Surprisingly, almost 90% of ex-smokers stopped on their own. Some of these had tried stopping many times. Each time you try to quit, the chances are better that you will stop smoking.

Do you know what the benefits are if you quit? The "Smoking Triangle" at www.power4health.org illustrates the short-term and long-term benefits of stopping smoking.

Research & Statistics on Smoking

Facts from the Surgeon-General's Tobacco Fact Sheet (www.surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco/smokfact.htm):

1. Recent surveys show that 25 percent of all American adults smoke.
2. More than 430,000 deaths in the United States each year are attributable to tobacco use, making tobacco the No. 1 cause of death and disease in this country. (United States)
3. Smoking prevalence among adolescents has risen dramatically since 1990, with more than 3,000 additional children and adolescents becoming regular users of tobacco each day.
4. Nationwide, medical care costs attributable to smoking (or smoking-related disease) have been estimated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to be more than \$50 billion annually. In addition, they estimate the value of lost earnings and loss of productivity to be at least another \$47 billion a year.
5. It would cost an estimated \$6.3 billion annually to provide 75 percent of smokers 18 years and older with the intervention—counseling, nicotine patches, nicotine gum, or a combination—of their choice. This

would result in 1.7 million new quitters at an average cost of \$3,779 per quitter—a move that would be cost-effective in relation to other medical interventions such as mammography or blood pressure screening.

6. Epidemiologic data suggest that more than 70 percent of the 50 million smokers in the United States today have made at least one prior quit attempt, and approximately 46 percent try to quit each year. Most smokers make several quit attempts before they successfully kick the habit.
7. Only 21 percent of practicing physicians say that they have received adequate training to help their patients stop smoking, according to a recent survey of U.S. medical school deans published in the Journal of the American Medical Association. The majority of medical schools do not require clinical training in smoking cessation techniques. It is hoped that this guideline will serve as a call to action.

Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence. Fact Sheet, June 2000. U.S. Public Health Service.

Seventh-day Adventist Contribution to Information on Dangers of Smoking

Seventh-day Adventists were the first organized group to have nation-wide stop smoking programs for the general public. These programs were called the 5-day plan to stop smoking and were very successful. These programs were conducted in churches and schools and based on the understandings that Seventh-day Adventists had from the writings of Mrs. Ellen G. White, an early Adventist leader and writer. She was given a distinct health message from God over 100 years ago on the dangers of smoking, while many physicians were still prescribing smoking as a cure for some respiratory illnesses.

Practical Applications on Quitting Smoking

Here are some things for you to try on your own if you want to stop smoking.

General:

1. Get plenty of rest. Smoking is one of the hardest addictions to overcome and you need all the energy you can get.
2. Addictions may be related to brain chemistry imbalances. Good nutrition is very essential, especially during the time you are trying to form new patterns of behavior.
3. Some habit patterns such as smoking often have triggers that go along with them. For example, sitting in a favorite chair or getting a cup of coffee, then automatically reaching for a cigarette. Try to look for these trigger emotions or habits that go along with your smoking so that you can avoid them.
4. Avoid being around others who smoke while you are trying to break the habit.

Specific:

1. Decide on a stopping date. Tell others when it will be so they can encourage you.
2. Throw all your cigarettes and any related items such as your lighter or matches away. Do not put them where you can get them again "if you need them".
3. Do not drink or use any beverages or medicines that contain caffeine or alcohol. During the time you are trying to break your cigarette habit, using any other addicting substances will cause you to be less successful. In addition, this is a good time to strongly consider giving these habits up also, as they are strong stimulants to smoking.
4. Drink plenty of water and juices during the first week you are quitting. Try to drink at least 6 glasses of water per day. Getting the nicotine out of your system is helped with increased amounts of drinks that do not contain caffeine or alcohol.
5. At any time during the day that you are at work and crave a cigarette, take a drink of water and go for a 10-20 minute walk. If you are at home, take a cool shower. It is difficult to smoke while in the shower.
6. Eat simple foods such as salads, fruits, vegetables, and whole wheat breads. Avoid overly spicy and rich foods because they may contribute to the craving for a cigarette. Avoid foods made with white flour, white

rice and refined foods. Without the complete vitamins, especially B vitamins, the body often develops cravings.

7. Do not skip breakfast and then go for a "coffee break". This is a sure time to need a cigarette. Instead, eat a hearty breakfast of cereals, fruit and whole-wheat toast. Avoid high fat foods such as bacon and eggs and pastries.
8. Go to bed early. An adequate rest may naturally help to reduce the need for a cigarette to keep you calm.
9. Thoroughly air out your house; sleep with the windows open.
10. Don't wish that you could have "just one more smoke". Remember that you have just given up a disgusting habit that could kill you, and gained a freedom that will be with you for life, and improve your health dramatically.
11. If someone knows that you smoked in the past and offers you a cigarette, tell them that you are an ex-smoker. This reinforces your decision to be a non-smoker.
12. Ask God to help you. Many people fail at quitting smoking, but God honors those who trust in Him and he will supply all your needs, and help you overcome this habit if you ask Him.

We have prepared a 6-page article in PDF format about the Marlboro Men (www.power4health.org) and what became of them, and some other scientific and spiritual information on how smoking causes addiction and how to quit smoking.

The American Lung Association's "Freedom From Smoking" web page (<http://www.lungusa.org/ffs>) has an on-line stop smoking program that you could try.

Nicotine Anonymous (<http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org/>) is an on-line support group that has some helpful suggestions.

The Surgeon-General's government web-site (<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco/>) has a lot of information on tobacco and smoking cessation.

Here are some groups that frequently have stop smoking programs in various areas:

- Hospitals in your area
- Public Health Departments of states and counties
- Seventh-day Adventist Hospitals and churches in your area
- Tobacco Control Programs of various states and counties