

BENEFITS TO QUITTING SMOKING

Did you know that just minutes after quitting, you begin to enjoy the benefits of a healthier, smoke-free life?

20 Minutes after quitting:

- ✓ **Blood pressure drops**
- ✓ **Hands and feet warm up to normal temperature**

8 to 24 Hours after quitting:

- ✓ **Carbon monoxide levels in the blood drop to normal**
- ✓ **Heart attack risk decreases**

SO FAR, SO GOOD!

2 Weeks to 3 months after quitting:

- ✓ **Circulation improves**
- ✓ **Walking becomes easier**
- ✓ **Lungs work up to 30% better**

NOT BAD, BUT YOU CAN DO BETTER!

3 Months to 9 months:

- ✓ **Cilia in lungs regain normal function**
- ✓ **Coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue, and shortness of breath decreases**

1 Year after quitting:

- ✓ **Risk of heart disease is half that of a smoker's**

WOW! YOU HAVE COME A LONG WAY!

5 Years after quitting:

- ✓ **Risk of stroke is reduced to that of a non-smoker's**

10 Years after quitting:

- ✓ **Risk of dying from lung cancer is half that of a smoker's**
- ✓ **Risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas decrease**

PIECE OF CAKE!

15 Years after quitting:

- ✓ **Risk of cancer of coronary heart disease is similar to that of people who have never smoked**

WE KNOW YOU CAN DO IT!

Need someone to talk to?



We can help!

Withdrawal Symptoms

Quitting smoking brings about a variety of symptoms associated with physical and psychological withdrawal. Most symptoms decrease sharply during the first few days of cessation, followed by a continued, but slower rate in decline in the second and third week of abstinence. For some people, coping with withdrawal symptoms is like "riding a rollercoaster" -- there may be sharp turns, slow climbs, and unexpected plunges. Most symptoms pass within two to four weeks after quitting.

Symptom	Cause	Average Duration	Relief
Irritability	Body's craving for nicotine.	2 to 4 weeks	Walk, hot baths, relaxation techniques, nicotine gum.
Fatigue	Nicotine is a stimulant.	2 to 4 weeks	Take naps; do not push yourself; nicotine gum.
Insomnia	Nicotine affects brain wave function, influences sleep patterns; coughing and dreams about smoking are common.	1 week	Avoid caffeine after 6 p.m.; relaxation.
Cough, Dry Throat, Nasal Drip	Body getting rid of mucous which which has blocked airways and restricted breathing.	a few days	Drink plenty of fluids; try cough drops.
Dizziness	Body is getting extra oxygen.	1 or 2 days	Take extra caution; change positions slowly.
Lack of Concentration	Body needs time to adjust to not having constant stimulation from nicotine.	a few weeks	Plan workload accordingly; avoid additional stress during first few weeks.
Tightness in the Chest	Probably due to tension created by body's need for nicotine; may be caused by sore muscles from coughing.	a few days	Relaxation techniques, especially deep breathing. Nicotine gum may help.
Constipation, Gas, Stomach Pain	Intestinal movement decreases for a brief period.	1 or 2 weeks	Drink plenty of fluids; add fruits, vegetables and whole grain cereals.
Hunger	Craving for cigarette can be confused with hunger pain; Oral craving, desire for something in the mouth.	Up to several weeks	Drink water or low-calorie liquids; be prepared with low calorie snacks.
Craving for a Cigarette	Withdrawal from nicotine, a strongly addictive drug.	Most frequent first 2 or 3 days; can happen occasionally for months or years	Wait out the urge. Urges last only a few minutes Distract yourself. Exercise; go for a walk around the block.

Adapted from materials from the National Cancer Institute

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