



# You Can Quit Smoking

## If you smoke, think about these facts...

- More than 1 million people successfully quit smoking every year in the U.S.
- Many people try a number of times before quitting for good. Even if you've tried before, keep trying.
- Most people who try to stop smoking succeed.

## Health benefits are immediate and long-lasting after quitting

**24 hours:** Your chance of heart attack goes down.

**1 to 9 months:** Circulation, smell, and taste improve. Your lungs work better. You have more energy and fewer colds.

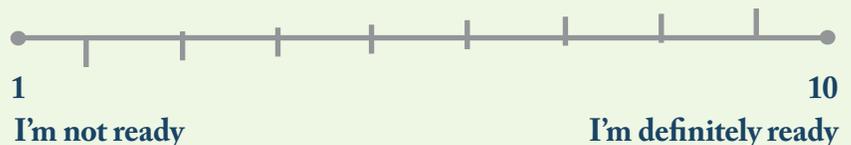
**1 year:** Your risk of heart disease is cut in half.

**5 years:** Your risk of stroke drops significantly.

**10 years:** Your risk of lung cancer drops to half.

## Choosing your next steps

On a scale of 1 to 10, how ready are you to quit smoking?



## If you're not ready

(1 to 3 on the scale):

- Make a list of what you like about smoking on one side and why you might be ready to quit on the other.
- Think about what lifestyle changes you can make to be more ready to quit.
- Ask friends who've quit how they did it.
- Wait 1 minute before lighting up when you feel the urge to smoke. Think of other ways you might respond.

## If you have mixed feelings

(4 to 6 on the scale):

- Reflect on your reasons for smoking. Do they outweigh your reasons to quit?
- Take small steps to make smoking less automatic. For example, buy a kind of cigarette you like less.
- Choose regular times during your day and night to practice being tobacco-free.
- Try a healthy new activity to replace smoking, such as swimming, running, or joining a singing group.
- Keep a "pack track" log. Record the times you smoke, who you're with, how much

you needed the cigarette, and how you felt before, during, and after it. Understand the role of smoking in your life and think of other ways to meet those needs.

## If you're ready

(7 to 10 on the scale):

- Write down the main reasons you want to quit. Keep the list in your wallet or on the fridge as a constant reminder.
- Talk about quitting with someone supportive. Support groups and friends can be a key factor in helping you succeed.
- See resources on the next page that can help.

## Getting ready to quit

- Set a quit date. Mark it on your calendar and get ready for that day.
- Get support from friends and family.
- Talk with a wellness coach to help you create and stick with a plan to quit. Studies show coaches can double your chances of success. They can also discuss medications, which can be a powerful tool to successfully quit. Ask your doctor about options.
- Encourage family and friends who smoke to avoid this around you.
- Plan healthy things to do for those times when you'd usually smoke. Take a walk or do an errand with a friend.
- Try going without a cigarette for a certain amount of time each day. Cravings pass whether you smoke or not.
- Practice saying "No thanks, I don't smoke" when someone offers you a cigarette.

- Throw away your cigarettes and remove ashtrays. Clean areas where you often smoke, like your car or kitchen.

## After you quit

- Know what to expect. The worst will be over in a few days. Some physical withdrawal symptoms can last up to 3 weeks.
- Make special plans for the first few days. Keep busy with smoke-free activities, like going to a movie.
- If you crave a cigarette, you can try:
  - Doing some other activity you enjoy.
  - Drinking some water or juice.
  - Calling someone to get support.
  - Practicing deep breathing to reduce stress.
- Avoid having "just one" cigarette. It's easy to start smoking again after just one.
- Be patient with yourself. You may feel irritable or tired from the withdrawal symptoms.

- Take it one day at a time. Do what you can to get through the day without smoking.
- Know your smoking triggers. If coffee, alcohol, or stress makes you want to smoke, be ready to handle those times without a cigarette.
- Choose healthy foods and stay active if you're worried about gaining weight after quitting. You can help avoid this by planning ahead.
- Go easy on yourself if you do slip and smoke. Lots of people have setbacks but still go on to quit. Pick yourself up and try again.

## Medications can increase your chance of quitting

With a doctor's prescription, most over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapies and oral medications are available at Kaiser Permanente pharmacies at no additional cost to most of our members.

Talk to your doctor about which medications might be right for you.

## We're here to help

We've helped over 300,000 Northern California members successfully quit tobacco—you could be next! Learn more about our quitting resources at:



**Wellness coaching:**  
[kpdoc.org/wellnesscoaching](http://kpdoc.org/wellnesscoaching)  
866-251-4514



**Quitting tobacco:**  
[kpdoc.org/quittingtobacco](http://kpdoc.org/quittingtobacco)



## Other resources

- **California Smokers' Helpline** at 1-800-NO BUTTS (662-8887) provides free counseling in multiple languages.
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline** at 1-800-799-7233 or [ndvh.org](http://ndvh.org) can provide resources and support. If you're hit, hurt, or threatened by a partner or spouse, this can seriously affect your health. There is help.

## HEALTH EDUCATION

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other medical professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist. Some photos may include models and not actual patients.

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