

## Life Without Smoking

Ask yourself and your physician the following questions before you quit smoking. The more you know, the easier it'll be for you to stop smoking for good.



Why do you want to quit?

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What will be the most difficult situations after I quit? How can I better handle these situations?

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Who can help me through the rough times? What should I do if I need more support while trying to stop smoking?

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Are there any medications that can help me successfully stop smoking? How should I use them?

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What's smoking withdrawal like and what's the best way to cope with it?

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For more information on how to stop smoking:

**Florida Quitline**  
(877) U-CAN-NOW (877-822-6669)  
American Cancer Society  
128 USF Magnolia Drive  
Tampa, FL 33612  
(813) 949-0291

**American Heart Association**  
11207 Blue Heron Blvd. N.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33716  
(800) 275-0448

**American Lung Association**  
8950 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St. N.  
Suite 205  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
(800) 586-4872

**Florida Department of Health  
Bureau of Tobacco Prevention**  
(850) 245-4144

**BayCare Freedom from Smoking Program**  
3001 W. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Tampa, FL 33607  
1-800-BayCare (1-800-229-2273)

[BayCareEvents.org](http://BayCareEvents.org)

# When You Want to Stop Smoking



[BayCareLungCancer.org](http://BayCareLungCancer.org)



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## How to Stop Smoking

Nicotine is a very addictive drug, which makes it difficult for many people to stop smoking. It often takes two or more tries before an individual can successfully give up smoking. **Don't lose hope.** You can live a smoke-free life.

## Many Reasons to Stop Smoking

- You'll live a longer, healthier life.
- You'll stop exposing your family and friends to harmful secondhand smoke.
- You'll save a lot of money by not buying cigarettes.



## Tips for Quitting

There's no best way to stop smoking. However, there are plenty of tips that have worked for former smokers:

- Quit only when you're ready; quitting for someone else rarely works.
- Write down the reasons you're quitting and look at the list often as a reminder.
- Plan the way you'll quit (cold turkey, gradually, with the assistance of the nicotine patch or nicotine gum, etc.) and set a date.
- Change your habits. For example, if you usually have a cigarette after eating, do something else after your meal, like walk the dog or brush your teeth.
- Properly use the medications provided by your physician.
- Reward yourself along the way for each day or week you make it without smoking.
- Go to restaurants that don't allow smoking.

## What Happens to Your Body

Your body experiences many changes when you stop smoking. Here are a few of the good things that begin to happen when you put out that last cigarette.

- **Twenty minutes later:** Blood pressure/pulse rate drops to normal.
- **Eight hours later:** Carbon monoxide level in blood drops to normal. Oxygen level in blood increases to normal.
- **Twenty-four hours later:** Chance of having a heart attack decreases.
- **Forty-eight hours later:** Nerve endings begin to regrow.
- **Seventy-two hours later:** Bronchial tubes relax and breathing is easier. Lung capacity increases.
- **Two weeks to three months later:** Circulation improves. Lung function increases up to 30 percent.
- **One to nine months later:** Overall energy level increases.
- **Ten years later:** The lung cancer death rate for an average smoker (one pack per day) decreases from 137/100,000 people to 72/100,000 people.
- **Fifteen years later:** The lung cancer death rate for an average smoker (one pack per day) drops to almost the same rate as that of a nonsmoker.



## Be Smoke-Free

Of the people who have stopped smoking, 90 percent have been able to quit on their own. This doesn't mean you shouldn't ask for help if you need it — it only shows that you can do it too.

## Setbacks

There's a chance you'll experience a setback on your road to becoming a nonsmoker. **Remember: The more times you try to quit, the more likely you'll be successful in your efforts.** The following are some of the common difficulties you may face once you've quit smoking:

- Cravings for a cigarette can cause a moment of weakness, so be strong and fight those urges.
- If you smoke after your quit date, consider it a minor delay — then stop smoking once again.

## Changes

It may be necessary to change some of your habits in order to remain smoke-free. A few of these changes might include:

- Making certain you don't replace smoking with eating
- Exercising more, which can take your mind off smoking, relieve stress and keep you in great physical shape
- Replacing negative thoughts with positive thoughts
- Cutting back on alcohol use, as drinking may lower your chance of success
- Learning new ways to deal with stress so you won't turn to smoking for comfort