

# Quit because you can



**An essential  
guide to quitting  
smoking**

# Yes

## you can quit smoking

Congratulations! Thinking about quitting is the first step towards becoming a non-smoker. It's good to understand why you smoke and the reasons why you want to quit smoking. Knowing the different ways and supports for quitting and planning your quit journey can help you to be more successful in quitting smoking.

But don't be put off, planning can be done quickly. If you've tried to quit before remember the things that worked for you and the things that didn't. You can use what you have learned to make your plan stronger.

Over the years we've learned a lot about how to quit smoking from those who know—people who have stopped smoking for good. What we have learned is here in your **Quit because you can** book.

**Keep this book handy** so you can refer to it as you go through the different stages of quitting.

Like all good things it may take some time and effort for you to quit smoking but millions of smokers in Australia have already stopped. You can too.

### **It's good to know**

Chemicals in cigarettes change the way some medications work. See your doctor about quitting if you are taking any medication.

If you are suffering from depression, anxiety or any mental illness, it is best to see your doctor for advice about quitting. With the right support many people with a mental illness have quit and they generally feel a lot better, not just physically, but also emotionally.

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# Reasons to quit



**“I was never able to keep up with my kids, I wanted to be able to kick around the ball without being out of breath.”**

# Do you know why you want to stop smoking?

*People who have quit say it's important to be clear about your reasons. Work out what reasons are important for you.*

*You may have tried to quit before, maybe many times. It's still a good idea to remind yourself why you want to quit.*

## What are you looking forward to when you quit?

### Feeling healthy

Smokers are more likely to catch the flu and other illnesses, and tend to have more severe symptoms. Even young smokers have more coughs, phlegm, wheezing and chest infections than non-smokers. In the months after quitting your immune system improves and becomes better at fighting infection.

### More money

In a way giving up smoking is like getting a pay rise—more than \$7,200 a year if you smoke 20 cigarettes a day. Start making your wish list and see how much money you'll save using the online calculator at [quitlinesa.org.au](http://quitlinesa.org.au) or [quitlinent.org.au](http://quitlinent.org.au).

### Getting fit

Smoking makes it harder to get enough oxygen to your muscles during exercise so you tire more quickly. Quitting lets your body work properly again and within a few months exercising is easier.

### Freedom from the hassles of smoking

White teeth, no stained fingers, the house and car smelling fresh and clean, and never having to check you have enough cigarettes.

### Less stress

Within a few months of quitting most people feel less stressed than when they were smoking.

### Regaining control

Many smokers come to realise that they are addicted and are not really choosing to smoke. Regaining control feels good.

### More confidence

Once you succeed, you will have more confidence to take on other challenges.

## Tips

Even now you might still be wondering whether you really do want to quit. Take your time to think about your reasons for wanting to smoke and your reasons for wanting to stop.

List all your reasons below and circle the three most important ones on each list. Then put a star next to the one reason that is most important to you—just one star, not one for each list.

### Why I want to smoke

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### Why I want to quit

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Your decision might be a very close one or one side may be a clear winner. The important thing is to decide which you most want to do and act on that decision.

It is common to set out to quit with a part of you still wanting to smoke. If you can accept this and work out how to get the things you got from smoking in other ways, it can make quitting easier.

### **Before or during pregnancy**

Quitting at any time during your pregnancy reduces the risk of harm to your baby. Quitting smoking when you're pregnant will make you feel good and give your baby a better start in life.

### **Quit for surgery**

There are many benefits when you quit before surgery including a lower risk of complications which can mean a faster recovery and less time in hospital.

### **Protect children**

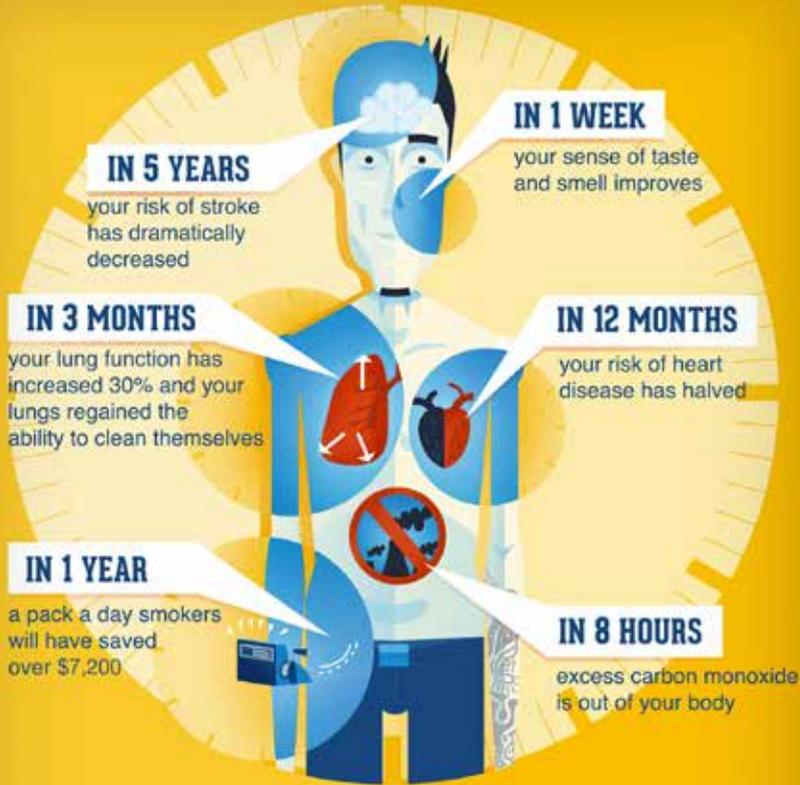
Children's delicate airways are more sensitive to dangerous chemicals in cigarette smoke in the air. Quitting smoking also reduces the chance that your children will take up smoking themselves.

*Quitting smoking has immediate and long-term benefits, even if you have a smoking-related disease.*

# When you quit

## The day you quit smoking your body starts to recover

<b>Within 6 hours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your heart rate slows and your blood pressure becomes more stable.</li></ul>
<b>Within a day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Almost all of the nicotine is out of your bloodstream.</li><li>• The level of carbon monoxide in your blood drops and oxygen more easily reaches the heart and muscles.</li><li>• Your fingertips become warmer and your hands may be steadier.</li></ul>
<b>Within a week</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your sense of taste and smell may improve.</li><li>• Your lungs' natural cleaning system starts to recover, becoming better at removing mucus, tar and dust from your lungs.</li><li>• Vitamin C levels in your blood improve.</li></ul>
<b>Within 2 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You cough and wheeze less.</li><li>• Your immune system begins its recovery so your body is better at fighting off infection.</li><li>• Your blood is less thick and sticky and blood flow to your hands and feet improves.</li></ul>
<b>Within 6 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You are less likely to cough up phlegm.</li></ul>
<b>After 1 year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your lungs are healthier and you are breathing easier than if you'd kept smoking.</li></ul>
<b>Within 2 to 5 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a large drop in your risk of heart attack and stroke which continues to decrease over time.</li><li>• For women the risk of cancer of the cervix is the same as someone who has never smoked.</li></ul>
<b>Within 10 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your risk of lung cancer is lower than that of someone who still smokes.</li></ul>
<b>After 15 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your risk of heart attack and stroke is close to that of a person who has never smoked.</li></ul>



**EVERY CIGARETTE**  
you **DON'T SMOKE**  
**IS DOING YOU GOOD**

*Stopping smoking reduces your risk of developing, and slows down any worsening, of lung disease.*

## Smoking causes disease

Smoking harms almost every organ in your body. But because it happens gradually you probably don't notice. The strain put on your body by smoking often causes years of suffering.

Tobacco smoke is made up of over 7,000 chemicals. At least 69 of them are known to cause cancer. Many of these chemicals pass through your lungs into your bloodstream. They go everywhere your blood flows.

### Smoking can cause many serious diseases including:

- **cancer** of the lungs, mouth, nose, throat, oesophagus, pancreas, kidneys, stomach, liver, bladder, bowel, ureter, ovaries, cervix and bone marrow
- **lung diseases** such as chronic bronchitis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease which includes emphysema
- **heart disease and stroke**
- **poor blood circulation** in feet and hands that can lead to pain and, in severe cases, gangrene and amputation
- **disabilities** such as blindness, hip fractures and painful ulcers.

### All cigarettes are toxic

It doesn't help if you smoke weaker tasting cigarettes such as those labelled 'fine', 'smooth' or 'refined'. These cigarettes have holes in the filter that let in air to dilute the smoke but you still end up inhaling the same amount of chemicals as you would from stronger tasting cigarettes and you do the same amount of damage.

*Two in three lifetime smokers will die from their addiction, on average ten years earlier than non-smokers.*

# THE SECRETS THEY KEEP

HERE'S WHAT THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY  
IS HIDING  
IN THEIR  
CIGARETTES



## METHOPRENE

A chemical used to get rid of fleas on your pets.



## BENZOPYRENE

You'll find it in coal tar and cigarette smoke. It's one of the most potent cancer-causing chemicals in the world.



## ARSENIC

This deadly poison makes your lips turn, and your breath turn bad.



## ACETONE

The tobacco industry refuses to say how acetone gets into cigarettes. It's one of the active ingredients in nail polish remover.



## LEAD

Lead poisoning stops your growth, makes you vomit and damages your brain.



## FORMALDEHYDE

It causes cancer and can damage your lungs, skin and digestive system. Embalmers use it to preserve dead bodies.



## TURPENTINE

Very toxic. Commonly used as a paint stripper.



## PROPYLENE GLYCOL

The tobacco industry claims they add it to keep cheap "reconstituted tobacco" from drying out. But scientists say it aids the delivery of nicotine - tobacco's addictive drug.



## BUTANE

Highly flammable. One of the key components of petrol.



## CADMIUM

Causes damage to the lungs, kidneys and brain. Boys in the body for years.



## AMMONIA

The tobacco industry says it adds flavour. But scientists have discovered that ammonia helps absorb more nicotine - keeping you hooked on smoking.



## BENZENE

This cancer-causing chemical is used to make everything, from pesticides to detergent to petrol.



NICOTINE IS ONE OF THE MOST ADDICTIVE DRUGS WE KNOW.  
EVERY YEAR, ALMOST 18000 PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA DIE FROM SMOKING.

## Deciding to quit checklist

### What are the things you want from quitting smoking?

From the following list, tick the things you are looking forward to when you are a non-smoker. Add your own ideas in the space provided.

- I will reduce my risk of heart attack.
  - I will feel fitter.
  - I will set a great example for the children around me.
  - My lungs will start to recover and be able to clean themselves properly.
  - I will have more money to spend any way I choose.
  - I will give myself a confidence boost by quitting cigarettes.
  - I will have more energy to play sport or keep up with the kids.
  - I will know I'm back in control and no longer addicted.
  - I will be free from the hassle of always checking that I have enough cigarettes.
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# Preparing to quit

Prepare

A man wearing a blue cap and an orange polo shirt is sitting in the driver's seat of a car. He is looking down at a black tray filled with cigarettes that he is holding in his hands. The background is slightly blurred, showing the interior of the car and some outdoor elements.

**“The last time I quit  
I set a date, got rid of all my  
ashtrays, lighters and things that  
triggered me to have a smoke and  
never looked back.”**

# Planning can help you understand why you smoke and set up some quitting strategies.

*Most people are not 100% sure about quitting and many are worried about how they might cope without cigarettes. This is normal. Don't put off quitting because you feel this way—there is lots of help to get you through.*

If you've tried to quit before, remember the things that worked for you and the things that didn't. You can use what you learned to make your plan stronger.

## **Getting a plan going**

- 1] Understand your nicotine addiction.
- 2] Know why you smoke.
- 3] Choose your best way to quit.
- 4] Start putting your quitting plan into action.

## **1 Understand your nicotine addiction**

Nicotine is the addictive drug in tobacco. After you've been smoking for a while your body gets used to nicotine and relies on it to feel normal.

### **Do you have any of these signs of nicotine addiction?**

- You smoke your first cigarette within 30 minutes of waking up.
- You smoke more than ten cigarettes per day.
- You have cravings (the urge or desire to smoke) and withdrawal symptoms (see page 22) when you try to quit.

Nicotine affects the chemicals in your brain, and after a puff, you may feel good for a moment or two. It may make you feel relaxed or more alert but this doesn't last long.

After a while you may feel tense or irritable, or you may find it hard to focus on what you are doing. But your next cigarette relieves these feelings. These up-and-down mood changes over the day are common among smokers. Quitting breaks this smoking–stress cycle.

## 2 Know why you smoke

All smokers have their own reasons for smoking. These reasons are usually tied to certain moods, activities, events, places or people. They may be quite strong bonds.

### Some of the most common reasons why people smoke are:

- addiction: to satisfy the craving for nicotine or a cigarette
- habit: feeling like smoking while doing things or taking a break, such as after a meal, with coffee or when drinking alcohol, while watching TV
- emotions: feeling stressed, upset, angry, frustrated, bored or happy
- pleasure: to enjoy something even more or to reward yourself
- social pressure: feeling part of the crowd, bonding with other smokers.

Being in these situations after you have quit will usually trigger cravings. Knowing what makes you want to smoke can help you plan how to cope in trigger situations.

### Smoking diary

Some people find it helpful to keep a smoking diary for a day or two.

Write down when you had a cigarette, what you were doing and how you were feeling at the time. You can rate how strongly the desire to smoke felt e.g. 1–5. Then record what you did.

Keeping a smoking diary can give you a good idea about your smoking triggers.

## 3 Choose your best way to quit

Some people see quitting as a private battle between themselves and cigarettes. But getting help is not a sign of weakness or lack of will power—it's a smart way to quit.

### Get some support

A support service gives you structure, motivation, encouragement, confidence and new skills. It is much harder to get these things when you try to quit on your own. Getting support will give you a much greater chance of long-term success.

## Here are some good support services:

- **Quitline 13 7848**

Quitline counsellors offer help with quitting for the cost of a local call (except for mobiles). Your Quitline counsellor is trained and experienced and knows how tough giving up smoking can be. They will talk with you about your difficulties with quitting and give you reliable information and support. You can arrange to have a Quitline counsellor call you. Your call is confidential.

- **Aboriginal Quitline 13 7848**

Quitline offers a tailored quit smoking service for Aboriginal people to speak with Aboriginal counsellors on 13 7848.

- **[quitlinesa.org.au](http://quitlinesa.org.au)  
[quitlinent.org.au](http://quitlinent.org.au)**

The Quitline websites provides information and support. You can also register online and a Quitline counsellor can call you at your chosen day and time.

- **Your doctor, pharmacist or other health professional**

Doctors and pharmacists are good sources of advice about stopping smoking especially for advice on quitting medications and nicotine replacement products.

You need to see a doctor if you want to use prescription medications or pay less for nicotine patches. If you have health problems such as a mental illness, diabetes or are taking medication, it is important to see your doctor or health professional before starting to quit. They may need to check your health and medication levels when you quit.



### For your best chance of quitting:

#### Get support

- Quitline 13 7848
- My Quit Buddy app
- talk to your doctor or pharmacist



Use **nicotine replacement products** or **quitting medications**

## Thinking about using quitting products

Nicotine replacement products and quitting medications increase your chances of quitting successfully. They are suitable for smokers who show any signs of nicotine addiction (see page 14).

They reduce withdrawal symptoms such as cravings, irritability, trouble concentrating and anxiety. They usually do not stop withdrawal symptoms altogether. Most people's smoking is also linked to habits and emotions so you are likely to still get some cravings in situations where you used to smoke.



Nicotine replacement products such as a patch, gum, lozenge, mouth spray and inhalator, work by replacing some of the nicotine you usually get from cigarettes. Using nicotine products to quit is much safer than smoking—they do not contain the dangerous chemicals found in tobacco smoke. You can use a patch and another nicotine product at the same time if one product is not enough to manage cravings.

A Quitline counsellor can explain how to use these products or talk to your doctor or pharmacist. Nicotine patches are much cheaper if you get a prescription for them from your doctor.

Prescription medications such as Champix (varenicline) and Zyban (bupropion), must be discussed with your doctor as they are not suitable for everyone.

If you slip up and have a cigarette it is safe to continue using your medication or nicotine products and to keep trying to quit.

## Gather information

Talk to other people who have quit about how they did it. There are some useful websites and quit apps on page 43. Remember different things work for different people.

## Learning from past attempts

Have you tried to quit before? Past attempts at quitting are valuable experiences that you can build on. What strategies worked best? Are there situations you need to prepare for? You could write these down in your *quitting plan* (see page 20).

## Quitting abruptly (cold-turkey)

Quitting abruptly or suddenly is a popular way to stop smoking. For smokers of fifteen cigarettes or more per day, using a nicotine patch while cutting down over two weeks before stopping smoking works well.

## Cutting down to quit

Some people quit successfully by cutting down but if you decide to do this:

- it's important to have a clear plan and a quit date
- use a support person or service to help you stick to your goals
- talk to your pharmacist about using nicotine replacement products while cutting down.

## Get help from friends and family

The support and encouragement of friends and family is important.

If you do talk to your friends and family about your quitting, explain how they can help e.g. by not offering you cigarettes if they smoke or by being patient if you are a bit irritable at first. Quitting with a friend can be useful as you can help each other through the hard times.

## Living with a smoker

If you live with a smoker, it can be good to talk to them about your plans. If they are ready to quit too, then quitting together can help. However if they are not ready, at least ask for their support by not making it any more difficult than it will otherwise be.

- Can you talk things over before you quit?
- Can you make the house smoke-free? If this isn't possible, see if you can agree to some rooms being smoke-free.
- How will you catch up without smoking cigarettes?
- Can they keep cigarettes out of sight?
- What kind of support will you need from them? What support are they willing to give?

***Remember with support from  
Quitline 13 7848 at any or each step  
of the way, you can double your  
chances of quitting successfully.***

## 4 Start putting your quitting plan into action

Make a decision about how you are going to quit.

### You may choose to:

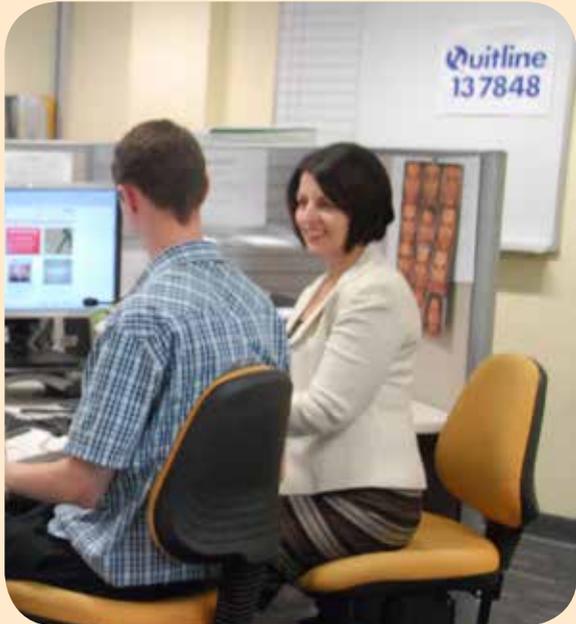
- call Quitline 13 7848
- talk to your doctor or pharmacist
- use a quitting medication or nicotine replacement products
- set a date to quit.



If you don't stop on your quit date, don't worry. It is not a test. Think of it as having a smoke-free day if the thought of a quit date worries you. It's just a way of helping you focus on what you need to do to quit and to put your plans into action. It's important to just have another go. Don't give up on giving up.

### Practise quitting

If you haven't tried to quit recently, you might set yourself some smaller goals to see how you would go before you quit. Try quitting for only one day. Or you could experiment by not smoking at times when you normally would such as when you're out with friends or having a break with other smokers at work. This will help you work out how much you need to prepare for these situations when you decide to quit completely.



## My quitting plan

Write out your quitting plan. Use your smoking diary (page 15) to help you.

■ **My main reasons to quit are:**

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■ **My three main triggers to smoke are:**

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■ **My main strategies to avoid smoking are:**

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■ **I will get support from:**

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■ **How I plan to quit (medication, NRT, cold-turkey, cut down to quit):**

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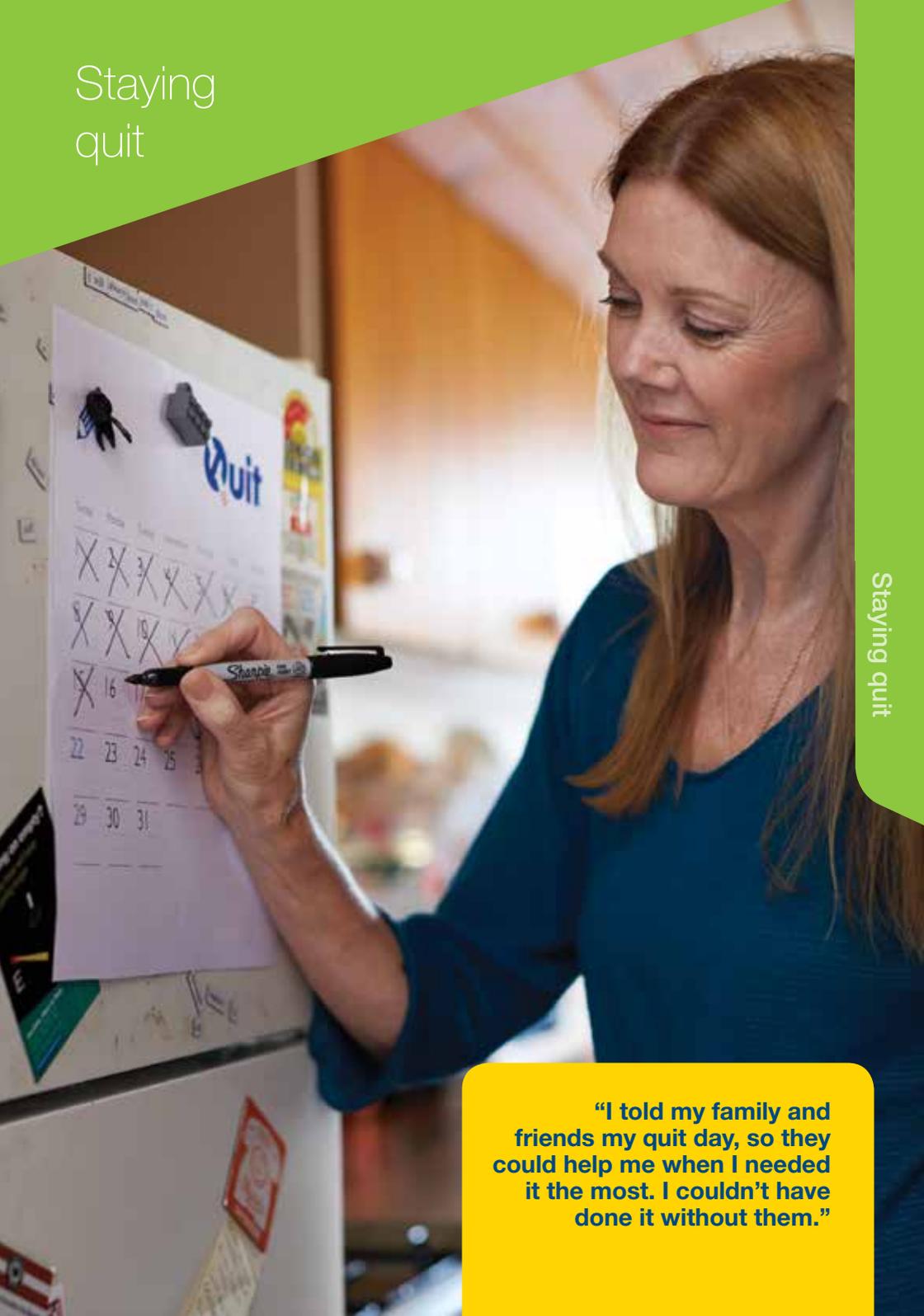
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■ **My quit date is:** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Keep a copy of your plan with you as a reminder.

Add to it if you find you need new strategies to deal with difficult times.

# Staying quit



Staying quit

**“I told my family and friends my quit day, so they could help me when I needed it the most. I couldn’t have done it without them.”**

# Now it's time to put all your work into practice and quit.

## You are ready

- You've made your decision to quit.
- You have the information or support you feel you need.
- You've done your planning.
- You've started putting your plan to quit into action.

## Understand withdrawal symptoms

Withdrawal symptoms are the way your body reacts when it stops getting nicotine and all the other chemicals in tobacco smoke. Think of them as recovery symptoms.

### Some people may also experience:

- coughing or sneezing
- mood swings
- mouth ulcers
- dizziness
- upset digestion and/or bowel
- more dreams.

Usually you won't have all of these symptoms and those that do affect you will rarely last more than a few weeks.

**Some withdrawal symptoms will come and go over the first week. Most are gone within two to four weeks, some people may have symptoms for longer. The emotional symptoms such as irritability or frustration will fade as your body adjusts to being nicotine free.**

Each craving usually lasts a short time but may be strong. Over time cravings will happen less often. You may get occasional cravings long after other withdrawal symptoms have gone. These cravings are triggered by being in situations where you used to smoke.

If you have trouble with certain withdrawal symptoms plan how you could cope or work around them e.g. warn your family you might be cranky for a few weeks and ask for their patience.

The more withdrawal symptoms you have, the more you will benefit from using nicotine replacement products or quitting medications.

Exercise can also help reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms. It may lower stress and help keep your weight down.

# SYMPTOMS OF WITHDRAWAL

DIFFICULTY  
CONCENTRATING  
**TIREDDNESS**  
EXCESSIVE SWEATING

HEADACHE  
OR DIZZINESS  
FEELING TENSE  
OR ANGRY  
IRRITABLE

**FEELING  
HUNGRY**

**COUGHING**

DIARRHOEA  
OR  
CONSTIPATION

**TINGLING  
FINGERS**

**RESTLESSNESS**

## Quitting and mood

Early on some people feel that their moods are up and down or all over the place e.g. getting angry over small things. This is quite normal and it will pass. Giving up cigarettes can also feel like losing a friend. Your emotions will settle down over time and you will feel more confident as you become comfortable with new ways of managing without cigarettes.

**Tips for managing stress are on pages 30–35.**

*Within a few months of quitting most people tend to feel less stressed than when they were smoking.*

## Coping with cravings

Few smokers can quit without feeling the urge or desire to smoke. The first week after you quit can be the hardest as cravings can be more frequent and intense.

**As well as using nicotine replacement products or prescription medications to reduce cravings you can also:**

- 1] change your environment
- 2] use coping thoughts
- 3] change what you do.

### **1** Change your environment

Cravings occur most commonly in situations that remind you of smoking.

You can reduce how often and how strongly cravings occur by making your environment 'quitting friendly'.

#### **Tips**

- Make your home and car smoke-free. If that's not possible have at least one smoke-free area for yourself.
- Use places where you are not allowed to smoke as 'protection' until the craving passes.
- If possible make sure there are no cigarettes in your house or car.
- Ask others not to smoke around you.
- Avoid situations that will be tough while cravings are still intense and frequent.

## 2 Use coping thoughts

The way you think about quitting can help you resist tempting situations.

### Try these ideas to help with negative thoughts:

- Use positive 'self-talk'. Tell yourself 'I can quit' or 'I don't need cigarettes' or 'I can find better ways to cope'.
- Focus your mind on something else: try distraction, meditation, daydreaming.
- If distraction is not working try to accept the unpleasant feeling and make the choice not to act on it. In other words, have a go at 'surfing the urge'.
- Remind yourself of your main reasons to quit. Carry something with you that will help you stay motivated such as a note or picture. Think of things you want to do as a non-smoker. Use the *Deciding to quit checklist* on page 12.
- Think of the benefits of quitting and the positive changes in your life since you stopped.
- Think about how good it will feel to show people who doubted you that you have succeeded at quitting.
- Set short-term goals such as taking one day at a time.
- Talk to someone about how you're feeling.
- Challenge negative thoughts. If you think a cigarette would be nice, tell yourself 'No, I'm staying strong.'



***Cravings occur most commonly in situations that remind you of smoking.***

### 3 Change what you do

Changing your routine is a great way to break the cigarette habit. Look at which habits or routines make you want to smoke. Think about how you can change them. Here are some changes others have found useful when quitting.

Habit	Routine-changing strategy
First thing in the morning	Having a shower first thing or getting up bit later
With coffee or tea	Changing to a different drink, brand or mug; changing the place where you drink it; or holding your cup in your other hand
At morning tea	Reading a magazine or book; sitting in a different place or with different people
At the computer at home	Shifting your desk around or redecorate it
After lunch/dinner	Going for a walk, cleaning your teeth
At afternoon tea	Trying a herbal tea; reading the paper
Straight after work	Doing some exercise or meditation
Just before you start dinner	Having dinner earlier or later
With alcohol	Changing to a different drink; holding drink in smoking hand
As you plan the next task/ chore	Breathing deeply or trying a quick relaxation exercise
As a reward e.g. completing a chore	Listening to music; having a piece of fruit
When you're with another smoker	Chewing gum; bringing a water bottle
At night in front of the TV	Changing the furniture around, holding a stress ball; doing some stretches
Just before bed	Having a warm drink or herbal tea; reading a book

As you become better at doing things instead of smoking, your cravings will tend not to happen as often or be as strong. If you are unsure of what to do in some situations, ask or watch what non-smokers do.

## Just one WILL hurt

Having 'just one' is the way that most people go back to regular smoking. Quitting means resisting the urge to smoke even one cigarette despite the cravings, the habit, the pressure and your own emotional reasons.

## Reward yourself

Congratulate yourself every time you beat the urge to smoke. Remember to treat yourself occasionally with the money you've saved, such as with a movie, new music, flowers or a meal out.

## Stay on track

Don't let other people talk you into having a cigarette. It's your decision—don't let others pressure you.

## Caffeine

Tea, coffee, cola drinks and chocolate all contain caffeine. Caffeine may make you restless, irritable and sleepless for a while. When you don't smoke, your body retains more caffeine. Try to reduce these products and have non-caffeine drinks.

## Social situations

For many smokers having a cigarette with smoking friends is a well-entrenched habit. Consider the strategies below.

### Here are some strategies that have been found useful when going out with friends

- Before going out make the decision not to smoke.
- Avoiding some or all of your smoking friends for the first few days or weeks.
- Having a quitting buddy or non-smoking friend with you as support.
- Finding some good phrases like: 'Please don't offer me cigs, I'm quitting', or 'No thanks, I don't smoke', 'It's ok, I don't feel like one at the moment'.
- Taking along something to keep your hands and mouth busy if you have a craving e.g. gum, bottled water, a game on your phone, a stress ball or a pen.
- Excusing yourself and going to the bathroom to wash your face or freshen up.
- Telling yourself it's okay to go home early if it's getting too tough. You can afford a taxi with the money you've saved by quitting.
- Sticking with the non-smokers.
- Being wary of the 'just one won't hurt' thought.

## Smoking and alcohol

For many smokers smoking and drinking alcohol go hand-in-hand.

If you do drink be careful not to drink a lot. Research confirms that if you drink enough to start feeling the effects it becomes harder to resist smoking.

- Some people avoid alcohol for a few weeks after they quit especially in situations where they would have smoked.
- If you do drink try cutting down on how much you drink by alternating alcoholic drinks with glasses of water.
- Change your drink to something you don't usually have to remind yourself that things are different.
- The more you drink in one session the more likely you are to lose sight of your quitting goals.

## Will I gain weight?

Gaining weight does not happen to everyone who quits smoking but it can happen. Quitting is a great thing to do for your overall health. Try not to be too hard on yourself if you gain a few kilograms while getting used to being smoke-free.

### Why do people gain weight after quitting smoking?

- Food sometimes takes the place of cigarettes as a reward or treat so it is easy to have too many snacks.
- Eating can be something to do during a break instead of smoking.
- Smokers sometimes miss the hand to mouth action of smoking and may reach for food instead.
- Nicotine slightly speeds up metabolism. After quitting it may slow down to a more normal rate which may result in weight gain.
- Nicotine can act as an appetite suppressant so quitters are often hungrier than normal for a few weeks. This decreases over time.



Putting on a few kilos may not be ideal but it is not a major health issue compared to the health impact of smoking. Most weight gain is in the initial stages of quitting and does slow down the longer you stay away from cigarettes.

When you have quit your fitness capacity and energy levels increase. This means in time you will get more benefit from exercise, increasing the potential to lose any weight gained.

### Tips to help manage your weight

Making small changes every week can be easier and longer lasting than trying to make a lot of changes at once.

- Plan your meals and snacks ahead of time
- Use the time and money you've saved from not smoking to plan and cook tasty, healthy meals that are low in fat
- Have some healthy snacks ready e.g. celery and carrot sticks or vegetable strips, whole fruits (not fruit juice) and nuts
- Try not to miss meals especially breakfast.
- Sometimes our bodies tell us we're hungry when really we're thirsty. Try drinking some water before reaching for a snack.
- Don't try to stick to strict diets. Constant bouts of hunger will undermine your success at quitting.
- Be realistic—allow yourself some treats occasionally.
- A hot drink can be comforting—try peppermint or herbal tea.
- If you use food to help you deal with feelings, such as anxiety, depression or loneliness, try other activities that make you feel better. If you feel you need more support talk to your doctor.
- Exercising can help keep your weight down and help you beat cravings.

Don't be alarmed if you gain a few kilos in the first few months. Weight gain does slow down the longer you stay quit, provided you don't over-eat.

***Try not to be too hard on yourself if you gain a few kilograms while getting used to being smoke-free.***

# Quitting checklist



- I have planned how to handle the places and events that I know make me want to smoke.
- I will keep my hands busy by doing something, or by fiddling with a pen or mobile phone.
- Even if I decide to have alcohol I will stick to my decision to quit.
- I know it's okay to avoid situations that will be tough while cravings are still intense and frequent.
- I often think about what I've achieved and the positive things that have come out of quitting. I will remind myself of these when I next feel like a cigarette.
- I will reward myself from time to time with the money I have saved.
- I will congratulate myself every time I beat the urge for a cigarette.

## Your new smoke-free life

Stopping smoking is a big change in your life. Learning to enjoy and value life without cigarettes is the next step. For some people this comes naturally while others find it harder.

### Coping with stress

If you used to smoke when you felt stressed (as most smokers do), then you are likely to get cravings to smoke next time you're stressed out. Take your time before reacting. Remember having a cigarette is not going to make the problem go away.

Resisting cravings and using other strategies to cope will make you less likely to have strong cravings in future stressful situations.

As a non-smoker, you've learned new skills and have shown great determination. How else can you get the support you need instead of falling back on a cigarette? Is there someone you trust who you could talk to? Do you have new, relaxing activities that help take the edge off things?

## Stopping nicotine replacement products

If you used nicotine replacement products and cravings become too strong after you stopped using them, consider using them again for a while longer.

## The quitting blues

Some people feel sad about stopping smoking. Even though people want to stop they may feel they are losing something that has been part of their life, sometimes a big part. This is a normal reaction. It usually passes but it may take some time.

If you are finding it tough try to stop yourself from dwelling too much on missing smoking, as this can bring on cravings. Focus instead on the benefits quitting has brought you. If these feelings continue and you're having difficulty coping, speak to your doctor.

*Remember it's normal to get cravings in situations where you used to smoke. Cravings become less intense the longer you remain quit.*

## Things people do to get through difficult times while quitting

- Revive an old hobby or interest now that you have more time and money.
- Or take up something that you've always wanted to:
  - learn a musical instrument
  - learn a new language
  - take art classes
  - do a short course
  - start a blog
  - investigate your family history
  - start a new sport or other hobby.
- Find something you really enjoy as it will help you to relax and to take time out.

## Tips

Think about a sudden stress or crisis that happened in your past when you were smoking e.g. bad news, an argument or a break-up. Imagine going through it now but without smoking. What strategies could you use? Write down your emergency plan.

- Ask a friend if you can call them (day or night) if disaster strikes.
- Call Quitline 13 7848 or Lifeline 13 11 14 for support.

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## Confront old smoking situations

While you were quitting you may have avoided risky situations such as people or places where you used to smoke.

When you're ready, prepare for and face these situations without smoking. The more time you spend in old smoking situations without the cigarette, the less likely you will be to get cravings. In time you'll feel more confident to make the choice not to smoke.

## Doing something about stress

List in the table on the next page, the main sources of stress in your life. Now think about how much control you have or want to have over these sources of stress. Next to each of these, write the number 1, 2 or 3 depending on whether you believe it is possible for you to:

- 1] get rid of the source of stress altogether
- 2] make changes to reduce the stress
- 3] learn to cope with the situation as it is.



## Tips for the tough times

### 1 Breathe deeply and slowly

### 2 Relax your body and your mind

- Lie down or sit comfortably.
- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.
- Breathe in and tighten your feet and toes. Hold your breath and hold your muscles tight for five seconds (or longer if you can). As you breathe out relax your muscles. Breathe slowly for a few seconds.
- Focus your mind on what you are feeling, the tension in your muscles and the flow of relaxation as you let it go.
- Repeat this exercise with your leg muscles, your stomach, your arms and hands, and your shoulders. Try each tense-then-relax cycle twice.
- When you are relaxed and ready open your eyes.

### 3 Look after your body

- Eat sensibly and well.
- Do some gentle stretches to relieve muscle tension.
- Get enough sleep.
- Ask a friend for a neck and shoulder massage.

### 4 Manage your workload and time

- Set achievable goals.
- Don't take on more than you can handle.
- Ask for help if you need it.
- Keep some distractions on hand for boring times when stuck in traffic or queues e.g. music or a stress ball.

### 5 Take care of your feelings

- Talk to others about your problems, don't keep your feelings bottled up.
- Try to be around people who support you.

### 6 Do things you enjoy

- Watch comedy.
- Do nice things for yourself occasionally.
- Write in a diary, read or draw.
- Practise meditation or mindfulness.

### 7 Exercise

- Go for a walk.
- Get off the bus one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Use the stairs instead of a lift.

## Sudden strong cravings

Occasionally you might get a craving ‘out of the blue’ even years after quitting. This is normal and doesn’t mean you are failing at quitting.

This happens because you return to a situation that is linked to your past smoking habit, even if you don’t recognise it at first e.g. you might start craving a cigarette when:

- visiting a place where you used to live when you were a smoker
- you meet up with old friends with whom you used to smoke
- on holiday or returning from holiday.

Once you’ve gone through withdrawal you are no longer addicted to nicotine. Expect these cravings to happen and see them for what they are—just memories of smoking—and let them pass. Draw on the strategies you used when you first quit to deal with these situations.

## Social pressure

If your friends or family are making quitting harder for you explain to them how you feel. Spend time relaxing with people who are glad to see you looking after your health.

## The new you

You may still see yourself as a smoker who’s quit. Start to think of yourself as a non-smoker—that is, someone who sees no real use for cigarettes. The more non-smoking experiences you have the more you’ll feel like a non-smoker or a proud ex-smoker.

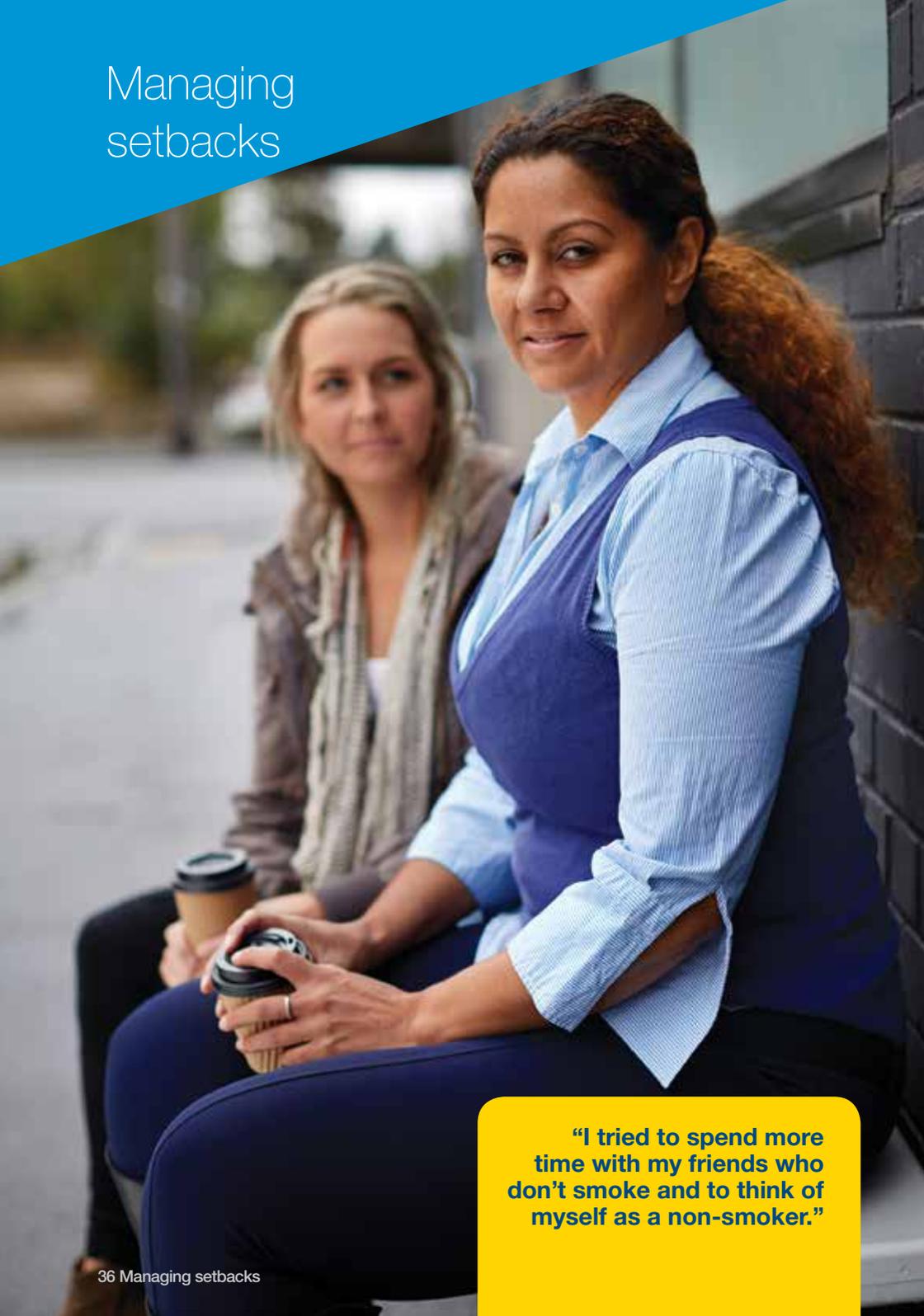
### Tips

Think about your plans at work and home for the next few weeks.

Can you make one or two changes to reduce the pressure?

Talk about problems openly with those involved.

# Managing setbacks

A photograph of two women sitting on a ledge outdoors. The woman in the foreground is wearing a blue vest over a light blue shirt and dark pants, holding a coffee cup. The woman in the background is wearing a grey jacket and a scarf, also holding a coffee cup. They are both looking towards the camera with neutral expressions. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a brick wall on the right.

**“I tried to spend more time with my friends who don’t smoke and to think of myself as a non-smoker.”**

# Quitting can be hard. You might be going along OK but suddenly ...

**You keep on thinking ‘Just one would be OK’ or ‘It’d be great to smoke just one a month or one a week’.**

But why weren't you smoking just one a month or just one a week before you quit? The answer is because tobacco is extremely addictive. That's why you've had to work so hard to quit. Don't let nicotine control you again!

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**You're really missing smoking and question whether quitting is worth the effort.**

Sometimes quitting can be really tough but you can get through it. Find other ways to treat yourself and keep doing things that you enjoy every day.

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**You take puffs of other people's cigarettes but think of it as ‘not really smoking’.**

The nicotine in a single puff of a cigarette can trigger your body's old response to crave the nicotine again. Asking your friends not to give you cigarettes could be helpful.

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**Long after quitting, you start to wonder what one cigarette would be like.**

Once you've been a smoker, one cigarette out of the blue has a very powerful effect on the brain which can awaken an old desire to smoke regularly. You have worked so hard to get to this point. Using a strategy that worked for you before can help you stay a non-smoker.

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***Be aware of situations that might set you back.***

## Tips for dealing with setbacks

- Remember every craving only lasts a few minutes. You can fight it off, you've done it before.
- Remind yourself of how far you have come. Do you really want to start all over again?
- List your reasons for quitting on a card that you can carry with you. Read the reasons whenever you feel the urge to smoke.
- Reward yourself for staying quit. Do things you enjoy.
- Have you found replacements for all the things you used cigarettes for? Think of what you can do to enjoy life without cigarettes.

## If you have a cigarette

Don't let one cigarette lead you back to full-time smoking. Think of how long you have gone without a cigarette and say to yourself: 'I'm determined to give up. After all I have only slipped up once. In the past I would have smoked twenty a day. I am determined to stay quit.'

Get rid of your cigarettes. Plan to look after yourself for the rest of the day (and tomorrow).

For more help call **Quitline 13 7848**.

*A slip-up is a puff of a cigarette, or a cigarette or two, after you've quit. You haven't gone back to regular smoking but there's a real risk you might.*

*Watch out for warning signs and get help from Quitline 13 7848 if they start to build up or things go wrong.*

## Learning from a slip-up

### **'I gave in to constant, strong cravings or felt restless and irritable.'**

Nicotine replacement products or quitting medication can take the edge off these cravings. If you are using these products check that you're using them correctly and for nicotine products, using enough.

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### **'The whole thing got too scary and difficult.'**

The first week is often the hardest to get through. Plan for low and high moods and stressful situations. Knowing what to expect can really help.

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### **'I started to smoke without realising it.'**

Change your routine to lower your risk of triggers for cravings. Also find a good replacement for cigarettes such as chewing gum, squeezing a stress ball or sipping from a water bottle.

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### **'I was stressed out!'**

It's best to plan ahead for stressful times. See pages 30–35 for ways to manage stress.

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### **'I slipped up when I had a few drinks.'**

Remember if you're over the drink-driving limit, you're more likely to slip up. For tips about alcohol see page 28.

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### **'I allowed myself to have one and regretted it.'**

See yourself as a non-smoker and find something to keep your hands busy.

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### **'I felt unable to say NO in the situation I was in.'**

You have the right to refuse a cigarette and can do so without upsetting others. Find some good phrases: 'Please don't offer me cigs I'm quitting', or 'No thanks I don't smoke.'

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## If you go back to regular smoking—don't despair

Begin to plan for your next attempt.

Most people who have successfully quit smoking for good have made several serious attempts.

Although you may be feeling disappointed you should take pride in what you have achieved. Every day that you spent smoke-free made your body healthier and helped to break your habit and weaken your addiction. You probably also learnt a lot about quitting and what works for you—this will help you next time.

## When to try quitting again

The best time to consider quitting again is when you feel like you're ready. But don't wait until the perfect time—it never comes.

### Tips

- Make a note of what you learnt from your recent quit attempt. What situations did you need to prepare for? What strategies worked best?
- If you have made your home and car smoke-free try to keep them that way.
- Call Quitline 13 7848. They understand that quitting for good can take a few tries. They won't judge you but will discuss your experiences of quitting with you and support you with what you decide to do next.

***Never give up on giving up.***

***A slip up doesn't mean you've failed.***

# Quitting support and services



**“I’d tried to quit a few times and my friends didn’t believe in me. I rang Quitline whenever I felt like I was going to have a slip-up and it made a huge difference.”**

## Quitline

### Call Quitline 13 7848

Quitline is a confidential telephone information and counselling service available throughout Australia.

For the cost of a local call (except mobiles), professional telephone counsellors provide encouragement and support to help you quit. For callers who would prefer Quitline support in a language other than English, Quitline uses the Translation Information Service. Ask about this at your first call.

### Aboriginal Quitline 13 7848

Quitline offers a tailored quit smoking service for Aboriginal people on 13 7848. Aboriginal counsellors are available and you can ask to speak with them if you prefer.



## Quitline websites

[quitlinesa.org.au](http://quitlinesa.org.au)

[quitlinent.org.au](http://quitlinent.org.au)

Quitline's website has a range of information that you can read, interact with and download.

You can also chat online to our counsellors during opening hours.



And you can find us on Facebook.

## Quitline apps

### My Quit Buddy

[quitnow.gov.au/internet/quitnow/publishing.nsf/content/quit-buddy](http://quitnow.gov.au/internet/quitnow/publishing.nsf/content/quit-buddy)

My QuitBuddy is a personalised app to help you on your journey to become smoke-free. It provides a countdown to your quit attempt and stats to track your quitting progress, such as days smoke-free, cigarettes avoided and dollars saved.



### Quit for you, Quit for two

[quitnow.gov.au/internet/quitnow/publishing.nsf/content/quit-now-apps](http://quitnow.gov.au/internet/quitnow/publishing.nsf/content/quit-now-apps)

If you're pregnant or planning to be, 'Quit for you, Quit for two' provides support and encouragement to help you give up smoking.

**For assistance and information on quitting  
smoking call ...**

**Quitline<sup>®</sup>  
13 7848**

**Quitline 13 7848**

Monday to Friday 8:30 am – 8:00 pm

PO Box 929,

Unley BC SA 5061

F +61 08 8291 4192

E [quitline@cancersa.org.au](mailto:quitline@cancersa.org.au)

**[quitlinesa.org.au](http://quitlinesa.org.au)**

**[quitlinent.org.au](http://quitlinent.org.au)**

