Overview
Mark Twain once said, “Quitting smoking is easy. I’ve done it a thousand times.” Why is it so hard to quit smoking? Nicotine (the addictive drug in cigarettes) is the answer. There are many tips and resources that will assist in the goal of quitting smoking.

OBJECTIVE: 
Reach the goal of decreasing or stopping the habit of smoking.

Aids to help you quit
• Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT): NRT provides nicotine to the smoker without many other poisons found in the cigarette smoke. The NRT that is available include: the nicotine patch, gum and nasal spray. NRT should not be used as the only treatment to quit smoking. Studies show that smoking cessation programs combined with NRT will double the chances of success rates for the smoker. As always, speak with your healthcare team to see what is best for you to kick the habit.
• Zyban or Chantix: These medicines are often used to help smokers kick the habit. Both are anti-depressants. They reduce the desire to smoke. Both can be used alone or with other NRTs. Both need a doctor’s order. Speak with your doctor if you would like to try this method.
• Smoking Cessation Classes: Studies have shown that smoking cessation programs are helpful. If you want to attend one, ask about the following:
  1. Length of class. It needs to be at least 20 –30 minutes long.
  2. Number of Classes. Having at least 4–7 classes is best.
  3. Number of weeks. Attend for at least 2 weeks.
  4. Make sure your leader is certified to teach a smoking cessation class.

Often, the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association or your local health department will hold smoking cessation classes in your area.
• Nicotine Anonymous Group: This is similar to Alcoholics Anonymous. There is a 12-step approach. To find a local meeting place, look in the business section of the phone book for a listing or search www.nicotine-anonymous.org for more information.
• State Quit Lines: Available for use, in reducing tobacco use.

Getting started
Before you chose to quit, you must think about these factors:
• Make a decision to quit. This is the first and most important step. Review your past attempts to quit. What worked and what did not work? Make a plan.
• Set a “Quit Date.” Pick a certain day to quit. Make it a special day (birthday or anniversary). Do not wait too long to pick your “quit day.” This will give you more time to think of reasons you do not want to quit. Commit yourself to this day. Mark it on your calendar. Tell your friends and family. Stock up on sugarless gum, carrot sticks and snacks that fit within your meal plan. Keep on saying, “No thank you, I don’t care for a cigarette!” This will give you a “sense of control.”

On the day you decide to quit, try to:
1. Get rid of all ashtrays.
2. Keep active and drink water all day long.
3. Ask yourself if alcohol, coffee or any other drink tempts you to smoke. If so, try to avoid them.
4. Call a friend for support.
5. If you miss having a cigarette in your hand or mouth, play with a pencil or rubber band. Keep a toothpick in your mouth.
6. Brush you teeth often.

• Deal with withdrawals. The American Cancer Society suggests for you to use the “4 A’s” when tempted to “just have one puff” or “to have just one more cigarette.” Distract yourself from smoking again.
  • Avoid. Stay away from the places where you are tempted to smoke.
  • Alter. Take a new way to work or take a quick walk.
  • Alternatives. Eat a quick snack or chew some sugarless gum.
  • Activities. Go exercise or start a new hobby.

• Keep your new healthy lifestyle. Staying off the cigarettes is what matters in the long run.

How can your doctor help you?
Your doctor can also refer you to a program that will help you quit for good. Quitting smoking is not an easy thing to do. Remember, to keep on trying, even if you relapse. Good luck!

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**QUIZ**

**QUESTIONS**

1. An example of a medicine used to help smokers quit smoking is:
   a) Glucotrol
   b) Zyban
   c) Motrin
   d) Capoten

2. When choosing a smoking cessation class, it is best to attend one that has _____ to _____ classes.

3. True or False: The “4 A’s” of smoking cessation are avoid, alter, alternatives and activities.

**ANSWERS**

1. b
2. 4 to 7
3. True

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