

Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#46 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

Still Smoking?

The time to quit is now.



Smoking made
Beth sick for life.
Now she has to take
medication every day.

10 Reasons to Quit

1. Live a healthier life.

Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, stroke and many other diseases. Your health starts improving the minute you quit.

2. Live a longer life.

Cigarettes really are “eating you alive.” Smokers die about 10 years sooner than non-smokers.

3. Be free of addiction.

Nicotine is one of the most addictive substances known.

4. Improve the health of people around you.

Second-hand smoke kills. It causes cancer, heart disease and other illnesses.

Children whose parents smoke are more likely to have bronchitis, asthma attacks, ear infections and pneumonia.

5. Save money.

Smoking a pack a day costs more than \$4,000 a year. You could do a lot with that cash.

6. Feel better.

Get rid of your cough, breathe easier and stop feeling sick all the time. Look better, too: Quitters have younger skin and whiter teeth.

7. Improve your quality of life.

You'll have more energy. Your clothes, car and home won't stink. Food will taste better.

8. Have a healthy baby.

Babies of women who smoke are more likely to be sick, to die prematurely or to be born too small or too soon.

9. Enjoy better sexual and reproductive health.

Men who smoke can have trouble getting and keeping an erection. Women who smoke have more difficulty getting and staying pregnant.

10. Join the crowd.

Most smokers in NYC have already quit. You can, too.



10 Ways to Make It Easier

1. Prepare yourself.

Make a list of your reasons for quitting and read it often.

2. Pick a quit date.

Get rid of ashtrays and lighters, and throw out all cigarettes.

3. Have a smoke-free car and home.

It is healthier for others and will help you resist smoking.

4. Get support and encouragement.

Tell your family, friends and coworkers that you are quitting and ask for their support.

5. Get a quit buddy.

Ask a smoker to quit with you, or find someone who has already quit who you can talk to for support.

6. Notice what triggers cravings.

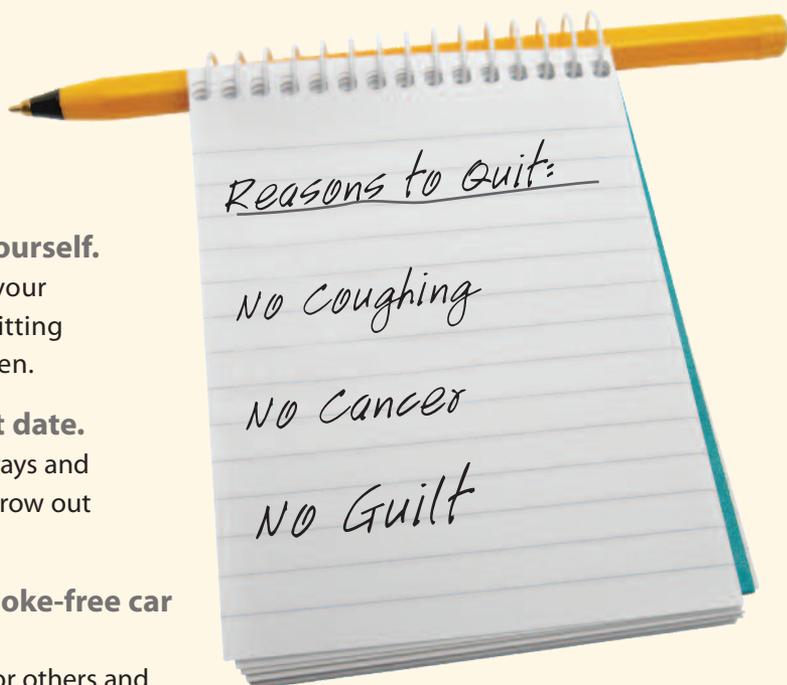
Alcohol, coffee and stress can make you feel like smoking. Make a plan to avoid or overcome your triggers.

7. Consider using medications.

The nicotine patch or gum, and medications such as Zyban (bupropion) and Chantix (varenicline) greatly reduce cravings and **double** your chance of success. Talk to your doctor.

8. Help yourself cope.

Drink a lot of water to help with cravings. Exercise to relieve stress and improve your mood and health – a brisk walk often does the trick.



9. Get your mind off smoking.

Talk to a friend when you feel like smoking. Get busy with a simple task, eat a healthy snack, take a walk or chew gum. Avoid places and situations you associate with smoking.

10. Stay away from that first cigarette!

Having even one can make you start back up. Cravings will lessen the longer you don't smoke. If you can quit for three months, you're more likely to remain smoke-free.

Don't Give Up

- It takes most people a few tries before they succeed. If you start smoking again, don't be discouraged – try again.
- You haven't failed – you have learned about the triggers and situations that make you smoke.
- The next time you quit will be easier. Just throw out your cigarettes and start again.
- It's never too late to quit. Most New Yorkers already have.



More Information and Help to Quit

- Getting help increases your chance of success.
- The NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation's quit smoking programs offer free or low-cost counseling and other services in New York City.
- Call **311** or visit nyc.gov/health/smokefree for more information.

Text NYC Quits

Text **NYCQUITS** to **877877** for free supportive text messages to help you quit smoking and stay smoke-free. Service is available in English and Spanish. Message and data rates may apply. Text **STOP** to quit, **HELP** for more information. For Terms of Use and Privacy Policy, visit nyc.gov/health.



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- For a free email subscription, visit nyc.gov/health/email.

Your Health Starts Improving the Minute You Quit Smoking.

- In **20 minutes** your heart rate and blood pressure fall.
- In **24 hours** your risk of heart attack drops.
- In **2 days** your ability to taste and smell improves.
- In **2-3 weeks** your lung function and circulation improve and walking is easier.
- In **1 year** your risk of heart disease is cut in half.
- In **5 years:**
 - Your risk of cancer of the mouth, throat and esophagus drops by half.
 - Your risk of stroke and heart disease begins to equal that of non-smoker's (in 5-15 years).
- In **10 years** your risk of dying of lung cancer is about the same as a non-smoker's.

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**CALL
311**

For Non-Emergency NYC Services
Telephone Interpretation in More Than 170 Languages