

# Why should I stop smoking?

You will improve your health and the health of others around you if you stop smoking. Your risk of heart and lung disease, cancer, stroke, heart attack, and vision problems will also decrease. You can benefit from quitting no matter how long you have smoked.

## Quitting may even prolong your life.

Nicotine is a highly addictive drug found in cigarettes. Withdrawal symptoms can happen when you stop smoking which can make it hard to quit. Symptoms may include:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Irritability
- Trouble sleeping
- Increased appetite

You increase your chances of success if you prepare to quit.



## Resources to Help You Quit

### Massachusetts Smokers' Helpline

1-800-784-8669

(1-800-Quit-Now)

Free one-on-one support over the telephone

### Quitworks—Quit Tip Line

(24 hour recorded messages)

1-800-943-8284

### North American Quitline Consortium

1-800-398-5489

Map.naquitline.org

(Click on your state and it will bring you to your state's quit line)

### Smokefree.gov

1-800-784-8669

For other resources and support groups in Massachusetts, visit: [makesmokinghistory.org](https://www.makesmokinghistory.org)

# Quit smoking today

Your life depends on it.



# Quitting today

## Set a quit date

This will help confirm your decision to stop smoking.

## Tell friends and family that you plan to quit

Explain that you may have withdrawal symptoms when you try to quit. Ask them to support you. They may be able to encourage you and help reduce your stress to make it easier for you to quit.

## Expect it to be hard to quit, but know you can do it

Smoking is a daily habit that becomes part of your life. Know the triggers that tempt you to smoke, so you can break this habit.

Write down a list of these challenges and have a plan to avoid them.

## Remove all tobacco and nicotine products from your home, car, and workplace

Also, remove anything else that will tempt you to smoke, such as lighters, matches, or ash trays.



## Setting a quit date is a great way to prepare to stop smoking!

If you currently smoke, or have within the last 12 months, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital-Plymouth encourages you to stop for your health and that of your family and community.

**Talk to your physician about different ways to stop smoking.**

## What should I know about weight gain after I quit?

You may gain a few pounds after you quit smoking. Remember that quitting helps decrease your risk for serious health problems caused by smoking. The following can help you avoid weight gain:

**Eat healthy foods.** These include fruits, vegetables, whole-grain breads, low-fat dairy products, beans, lean meats, and fish. Eat healthy snacks, such as low-fat yogurt, if you get hungry between meals. Chew sugarless gum. Ask your caregiver if you need to be on a special diet.

**Drink water before, during, and between meals.** This will make your stomach feel full and help prevent you from overeating. Ask your caregiver how much liquid to drink each day and which liquids are best for you.

**Exercise.** Take a walk or do some kind of exercise every day. Ask your caregiver what exercise is right for you. This may help reduce your cravings and reduce stress.

## What are some tools to help me stop smoking?

You may be able to quit on your own, or you may need to try one or more of the following:

**Counseling** from a trained caregiver can provide you with support and skills to quit smoking. They will also teach you to manage your withdrawal symptoms and cravings. You may receive counseling from one counselor, in group therapy, or through phone therapy, called a quit line.

**Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)** such as nicotine patches, gum, or lozenges may help reduce your nicotine cravings and other withdrawal symptoms. You may get these without a doctor's order.



**Prescription medicines** such as nasal sprays or nicotine inhalers may help reduce your withdrawal symptoms. Other medicines may also be used to reduce your urge to smoke. Ask your caregiver about these medicines. You may need to start certain medicines two weeks before your quit date for them to work well.

## How can I manage my cravings?

### Avoid situations, people, and places that tempt you to smoke

Go to nonsmoking places, such as libraries or restaurants. Understand what tempts you and try to avoid these things.

### Keep your hands busy

Hold things such as a stress ball or pen. Keep lollipops, gum, or toothpicks in your mouth to distract you from your cravings.

### Avoid alcohol and caffeine

These drinks may tempt you to smoke. Drink healthy liquids such as water or juice instead.

### Reward yourself when you resist your cravings

Rewards will motivate you and help you stay positive.