

# ► *It's Time to* **STOP Smoking!**



**An** abundance of evidence exists to prove that smoking cigarettes or using smokeless tobacco is a serious health hazard. It is also expensive. A one pack-per-day habit costs over \$1,000 per year. Quitting may not be easy, but it can be done, as many ex-smokers have proven. You may be able to do it on your own or you may need some outside help. It isn't important how you do it. What is important is that you are quitting.

## **The Beginning**

Probably the most important aspect to success is your readiness and determination to quit. Once you've made up your mind to stop, this hurdle is behind you. Now you can begin to explore ways of quitting and the variety of support available to you.

At this point, it also might be a good idea to start a smoking diary that lists when you smoke during the day. This will help you analyze your smoking urges. Once you begin to understand when you smoke and what sort of feelings or emotions trigger your desire to light up, you're on the track toward controlling your habit. Keep your diary for several days before you stop smoking.

## **Where to Go**

Sometimes you need go no further than yourself. Some people, by exerting their willpower and keeping their thoughts and actions under strict control, can stop smoking with no outside help. However, everyone should get a basic knowledge of why they smoke and how they got addicted.

Many books exist on the subject. Go to the public library and select books you think might be most helpful. Also, organizations dedicated to the health of heart and lungs usually have a lot of free literature designed to assist in quitting. Call the American Cancer Society, The American Lung Association or the American Heart Association.

## **Other Aids**

Support groups are available in communities all over the country. Check with the same groups listed above, search online, or consult the Yellow Pages. Hospitals, clinics, universities and other medical research organizations often have stop-smoking programs.

Also, seek help from your Employee Assistance Program [EAP]. Any health professional should be able to guide you to the sources that would be most valuable to you.

Whether you decide to stop with the help of a book or prefer the support of a group, you will find the techniques are similar.

All good programs encourage behavior modification—changing your way of life so that cigarettes are no longer important in certain situations.

Once you have decided to quit, you will find lots of material available to help you reach your goal.

***If you or someone you know is having a problem, contact your EAP—help is available!***

## **Resist the Urge**

- Think positive thoughts and leave out the negative ones.
- Brush your teeth daily and enjoy the fresh taste in your mouth.
- Call a friend or family member for support.
- Eat several small meals during the day because this will help suppress the urge to smoke.
- Create a non-smoking environment around you and create new habits.
- Don't drink alcohol, coffee, or any other drink you link to smoking.
- Chew sugarless gum, or suck on sugarless lollipops or hard candy.
- Avoid spicy or sugary foods.
- Be prepared for situations to arise that may make you want to smoke again. Remind yourself of the reasons you decided to quit.
- Be patient with yourself. To quit smoking takes time and won't happen overnight.
- Remember that the urge to smoke is temporary. Take a deep breath, hold for a few seconds, and exhale slowly. The urge to smoke will soon pass.
- Reward yourself for doing your best.



For further information, please call your EAP:  
**1.800.492.4357**

Callers with TTY equipment, please call:  
**1.800.338.2039**

Online Services: [www.mhnetep.com](http://www.mhnetep.com)

