



NJWELL
Working for a
Healthy New Jersey



**DON'T USE
TOBACCO**

THE PROCESS OF QUITTING TOBACCO

Tobacco cessation is a PROCESS.

- After deciding to quit, be sure to plan and prepare for your quit attempt, have a quit date, and plan for maintaining your tobacco free status.
- Remember: Each quit attempt is a learning experience. Every attempt makes you stronger and able to be more successful next time.
- Stress is both a contributor to tobacco use and a common reason for relapse. Be sure to learn stress management techniques to support your tobacco free journey.
- Withdrawal symptoms – such as coughing, increased appetite, and difficulty sleeping – often start within a few hours, peak a few days later, and last approximately two weeks.
- Cravings are typically strongest within the first few days. Each craving tends to last about **10 to 20 minutes** and then pass. Cravings usually begin to lessen in strength and frequency after the first week, and are usually gone completely in one to three months.

Tobacco cessation is a CHALLENGE.

One of the reasons stopping tobacco use is so difficult is due to what the American Lung Association calls the Three Link Chain of Addiction. This habit affects three main areas of our lives. It is important to address as many aspects as possible to set yourself up for the highest chance of success.

The Three Links include:

- Physical: involves mood, appetite, heart rate, blood pressure, and a combination of stimulation, relaxation and pleasure. Some studies have shown smoking tobacco to be more addictive than heroin or cocaine.
- Mental: involves automatic behaviors, habit, coping with stress, environmental cues, and “self-medication.”
- Social: involves influence by peers and family members and identification with groups. This typically starts during adolescent or teen years.

Additional factors that can make quitting hard include physical and/or mental health conditions, other substance use, high stress level and poor sleep.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Cigarette smoking is THE BIGGEST preventable cause of death.
- Some studies have shown the risk of heart attack lowers to the risk of non-smokers within TWO YEARS after quitting smoking.
- ONE YEAR after stopping smoking, your risk of dying from coronary heart disease will be decreased by HALF.



Reach out to your healthcare provider for any further questions on tobacco use, assistance with quitting, or supporting a family member or friend in their quit process.

QUIT DATE

HOW TO QUIT — STRATEGIES FOR QUITTING TOBACCO

Before quitting:

- Increase your motivation by relating your values and priorities to quitting tobacco, considering your self-image after you quit, and thinking about how others you love will benefit from you quitting.
- Understand your specific personal challenges to quitting.
- Identify your personal triggers and any associations you notice with your smoking.
- Track your use of tobacco for at least one week. Include notes on how much you used, location, time of day, your mood at the time, who was with you, etc.
- Proactively determine possible tobacco-use alternatives that may work for you.
- Obtain social and household support by having conversations and sharing what may be helpful for you.
- Manage your environment to decrease triggers and set yourself up for success.
- Consider modifying driving routes, work break areas or other parts of your environment to disassociate from habits and triggers.
- Choose a reward for yourself after reaching different goals. Pick goals that do not hinder other wishes you have for yourself.
- SET QUIT DATE. Quit dates two to four weeks away are typically effective.

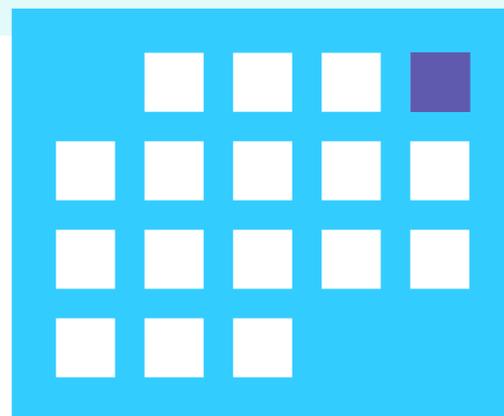
While quitting:

- Experiment with different techniques and modify as needed.
- Do something active.
- Wait it out for 15 minutes. Most cravings are short-lived.
- Use breathing techniques and other relaxation strategies to decrease overall stress level and manage cravings.
- Use mindfulness practices to overcome cravings and solidify perspective and goals.
- Remember why you are quitting. Write down your reasons for quitting and keep it visible.
- Recover after slips. Stay positive and remember all you have learned and accomplished. Think about what did and did not work well for you. What may you do differently now to be tobacco free again?

Maintaining tobacco free status:

- Choose a reward for yourself.
- Reflect on the benefits you've noticed since you quit.
- Continue stress management and relaxation techniques.
- Plan ahead for tempting situations.

Sources: American Lung Association, American Cancer Society, Up to Date



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Take advantage of additional support options in your quit journey, including: Smartphone apps, online, telephonic (800-QUIT-NOW) and texting (SmokeFreeTEXT) programs.

DID YOU KNOW?

Research shows people are more likely to be successful quitting tobacco if they use a combination of coaching for behavior change and medication aids, such as Chantix, Wellbutrin or nicotine replacement methods (patch, gum, lozenge, nasal spray or inhaler).

