



The Tavistock and Portman
NHS Foundation Trust

Smoking

A self-help guide

Using self-help tools

The strategies/tools suggested in this booklet are evidence based methods of managing your wellbeing and reducing the effects the way that we feel has on our everyday life. We are all individuals, and may respond to situations in different ways, therefore not every tool or strategy will work for everyone. This is especially so with smoking. For example, some people are able to quit without the use of any aides, but lots of other people find the use of Nicotine Replacement Therapy or another intervention useful. Talk about this with your clinician, or get in touch with the Physical Health Specialist Lead at the Trust if you are unsure.

When trying to change your behaviour, it is not usually as easy as 1, 2, 3! Behaviour change often means that you will have setbacks, but it is important to remember that these are just that. Changing behaviour permanently takes time, practice, and dedication to succeed in the future. Just like riding a bike, you won't be able to ride it the first time you sit on one, and will probably have some falls along the journey! But with time, practice and exploration it is possible for everybody to improve their physical health, which will undoubtedly have a great impact on their emotional health and wellbeing.

If you would like this booklet in a more accessible format, or, in another language, please contact communications@tavi-port.nhs.uk

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Beginning the journey

This booklet is designed to help you to quit smoking. Stopping smoking is the single most important thing that you can do to improve your physical health. Evidence shows that the majority of smokers in the UK want to quit smoking, but are unsure where to start, or have tried previously and have failed.

Stopping smoking should therefore, be viewed as a journey. There may be some setbacks in your journey, but it is important to keep the overall goal or destination in mind – to quit smoking for good.

Within this booklet, you will find information on quitting smoking, advice on where to get further support within the community and at the Trust, and exercises to

- Learn about your smoking behaviour
- Develop strategies to quit smoking, and
- Remain a non-smoker

Currently in the UK it is estimated that there are approximately 9.4 million smokers in the UK, which is just under 1 in 5 adults. About half of persistent smokers will eventually be killed by their habit. Each year in the UK, over 100,000 smokers die from smoking related causes.

You can become ill from smoking if you smoke yourself, or through breathing in other people's smoke (passive smoking).

Evidence shows that the best way to quit smoking for good is through the support of a stop smoking advisor and a combination of nicotine replacement therapy.

What are the risks of smoking?

How does smoking affect your health?

Cigarette smoke contains at least 4,000 different types of chemicals that are harmful to humans within it. At least 69 of these are known to directly cause cancer, and many are poisonous. Lots of these products are also found in everyday household products, but these products usually carry a warning label on them. For example:

- Arsenic – used in rat poison
- Formaldehyde – used to embalm dead bodies
- Benzene – found in cement
- Butane – used in lighter fluid
- Lead – used in batteries
- Cadmium – makes up a part of battery acid
- Carbon monoxide – released in car exhaust fumes
- Hexamine – contained within barbeque lighter fluid
- Tar – sticky material used for paving roads
- Ammonia – used as a cleaning agent
- Acetone – nail polish remover ingredient

Smoking and your physical health

Smoking causes at least 15 different types of cancer (lung, larynx, oesophagus, nasopharynx, oral cavity, pharynx, bladder, pancreas, kidney, liver, bowel, cervix, stomach, leukaemia and ovarian cancers. Overall, the prevalence of smoking-related cancers are decreasing, but this is only due to the fact that more and more people are quitting smoking in the UK.

When it comes to the health of your heart, smokers have at least twice the risk of having a heart attack compared with people who have never smoked. This is because smoking damages the lining of your arteries, by creating a wall of fatty material within it. Eventually over time, this narrows, which can cause angina, and eventually clogs your artery which can cause a heart attack or stroke.

Smoking also damages your lungs and can lead to conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which includes bronchitis and emphysema and pneumonia. Smoking can also make long term health conditions such as asthma or respiratory tract infections worse such as the common cold.

Smoking has also been found to cause impotence in men and can negatively affect the fertility of both men and women.

In pregnant women, smoking can cause a miscarriage, a premature birth, a low birth weight baby and stillbirth.

Passive (secondhand) smoking

Second hand smoke comes from 2 places: the tip of a lit cigarette, and also through the smoke that a person breathes out of their lungs. Breathing in secondhand smoke increases your risk of getting the same health conditions as smokers. There is no risk free exposure to secondhand smoke. For example, secondhand smoke has been found to increase the risk for stroke by 20-30% in a non-smoker, and increase the risk of developing heart disease by 25-30%. Secondhand smoke causes numerous health conditions in infants and children, including more frequent and severe asthma attacks, respiratory infections, ear infections and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

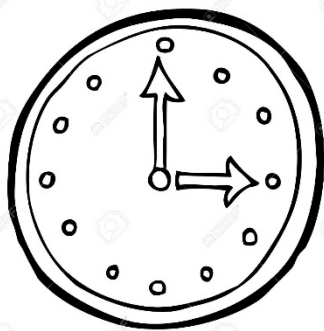
What happens when I quit smoking?

Although many smokers will know of the above information, sometimes even that alone is not enough to help them to quit smoking.

Quitting smoking is a daunting process. Smoking is a habit that is often ingrained into our daily lives – with the day being punctuated by cigarette breaks. Many smokers have also tried to quit smoking before, sometimes on many occasions, but without any success. The key to quit smoking is to never give up giving up. You will have slip ups, and there will be bumps in the road, but it is important to stay focussed on that end goal.

Many smokers think that in order to reap the benefits of quitting smoking, they will have had to stay quit for a long period of time. This is simply not true. See below for a timeline of what happens within your body when you quit smoking:

Smoking timeline



- **After 1 hour:** After as little as 20 minutes after your last cigarette was smoked, the heart rate drops and returns to normal. Your blood pressure will also begin to drop and your circulation may start to improve.
- **After 12 hours:** Cigarettes contain known toxins within it, one of which is carbon monoxide. This gas is especially harmful and can be fatal in high doses. It prevents oxygen from entering the lungs and blood. When inhaled in large doses at a time, suffocation can occur from a lack of oxygen. After 12 hours from your last cigarette, the body cleanses itself of the excess carbon monoxide from the cigarettes, and your carbon monoxide levels return to normal, increasing the oxygen levels within your body.

- **After 1 day:** Your risk of getting a heart attack begins to decrease. Smoking also raises the risk of developing coronary heart disease by lowering good cholesterol. This makes exercise harder to do, and also allows for the build-up of bad cholesterol in your body. After not smoking for a day, your blood pressure will drop even further, decreasing the risk of heart disease from smoking-induced high blood pressure. This means that your oxygen levels would have risen, making exercise and physical activity easier to do.
- **After 2 days:** Carbon monoxide will be completely eliminated from your body. While it is healthier to have no nicotine in your body, this can cause nicotine withdrawal. This is the time that you will most likely experience moodiness and irritability, headaches and cravings as the body readjusts. Your lungs will also start to clear out mucous and other smoking debris, which usually results in you coughing up gunk or black stuff. Smoking also damages the nerve endings responsible for smell and taste, so someone might notice that their ability to taste and smell will improve by this time.
- **After 3 days:** You will notice that your breathing becomes easier. As well as this, your bronchial tubes will start to relax and your energy levels will increase.
- **After 2 weeks:** Your cravings to have a cigarette would have lessened by this time.
- **After a month:** Your lung function will begin to improve. As your lungs will heal, ex smokers will notice that they will be coughing less and will not experience as much shortness of breath. Your ability to run or walk for longer will increase and former smokers might notice that they become better at playing sports or conducting activities that work their heart, such as things that involve running or jumping.
- **After 9 months:** At this point, the lungs have significantly healed themselves. The cilia (very delicate, hair-like structures within the lungs) have recovered from the damage that they would have endured from cigarette smoke. These structures help to push mucous out of your lungs and fight infections. You may also notice that you are less likely to get lung infections because your healed cilia are able to do their job better.
- **After 1 year:** After a year of quitting smoking, your risk for coronary heart disease decreases by a half. This risk will continue to drop even more as time goes by.
- **After 5 years:** After 5 years without smoking, the body has healed itself enough for the arteries and blood vessels to begin to widen again. The widening means the blood is less likely to clot, lowering the risk of stroke. As time goes on, the risk of stroke reduces even more as the body heals.
- **After 15 years:** After not smoking for 15 years, the likelihood of developing coronary heart disease and pancreatic cancer is the same as a non-smoker. Your risk of having a heart attack falls to the same as someone who has never smoked.
- **After 20 years:** After 20 years, the risk of death from smoking-related causes, including lung disease and cancer drops to the same level as someone who has never smoked in their life.

Starting to Stop

Thousands of people across the UK have successfully quit smoking and all of them went on the same journey.

1. **Set a date.** If you are at this stage, you have probably already thought about quitting before in the past, but have been unsure where to start. The first place to start is by setting a date of when you will quit. Try to make sure that the date falls on an 'average' day in your life, not where you have something big to manage.
2. **Prepare to stop.** This involves mentally preparing yourself for that date, ensuring that you have let your friends and family know. You might even be able to convince someone to join you on your journey to quit with you, which would mean that you could both support each other!

Take your time to also prepare yourself in other ways, such as through running down your cigarette or tobacco supply, or throwing away your last cigarettes. Contact your local stop smoking service and book in with a stop smoking advisor, or contact the Physical Health Specialist Practitioner at the Trust. By doing this, you will have access to 1:1 support, or support through accessing a stop smoking group where you will be able to meet others like you who are also on their quit journey.

If neither of those options work for you, you can sign up to the national NHS Together programme, which will allow you access to a national smoking advisor, who will call you, send you motivational texts and email you at crucial moments.

We would not advise you to use willpower alone, as evidence shows you are much more likely to be successful in your quit attempt with support and an NRT or e-cigarette product.

3. **Go smokefree.** When the date arrives, try to have a plan in place of what you are going to do. For example, if you have a craving, how will you make sure that you manage that? The effective use of NRT products or e-cigarettes might be useful here.
4. **Stay smokefree.** Cravings will come and go, but it is important to make sure that you take it one day at a time. For each day that you are smokefree, rewarding yourself with something small could be a helpful way of keeping you on track. Make sure that you note things like how much money you are saving, and use that money towards something that you have always wanted. If you find certain situations tricky to not smoke in, it might be helpful to avoid those for a few weeks until you feel more confident about staying quit.

My motivation

What do I stand to gain from quitting?

- Better health and wellbeing
- Free from dependence (no more standing in the rain smoking a soggy cigarette!)
- More time to spend with your loved ones
- Clearer lungs
- Improved fitness
- Improved skin, hair and nails
- Taste your food better
- Reduced stress, low mood and anxiety
- Smell things better
- More money to spend on yourself and family

How much does my smoking cost me?

You might find that it costs you more than you think!

I spend £_____ amount a week on smoking.

Multiply this by 52 to give the amount you spend on smoking in a year £_____

In 2 years £_____

In 5 years £_____

In 10 years £_____

My top 5 reasons for going smokefree

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

5 day countdown

My quit date is ___/___/_____

5 days before you quit

- Think about your reasons before quitting
- Tell your family and friends that you are quitting
- Stop buying cigarettes

4 days before you quit

- Pay attention to why and where you smoke
- Think of other things to hold in your hand (a piece of plasticine, a toothpick, a rubberband or some blu-tack is useful)
- Write down the habits and routines that you will need to change. What will you replace them with?

3 days before you quit

- Think about the benefits of quitting smoking that are personal to you. Is this your health, to improve your skin, to save money? Make this into a poster or sign and hang it somewhere in your home where you can see it.
- Think about who you will reach out for help

2 days before you quit

- Make sure that you have your NRT products or e-cigarette, along with everything else that you will need to help your quit attempt

1 day before you quit

- Start to dispose of your lighters, ashtrays, pipes, papers, filters and anything else that you have to smoke.
- Make a plan of what you are going to do tomorrow

Quit day

- Try to stick to the plan you made yesterday and keep busy
- Remind your family and friends about your quit day
- If you drink, stay away from alcohol
- Make sure that you reward yourself! Quitting is hard and you deserve a treat!

Smoking pearls of wisdom

But having just one won't set me back will it?

Many smokers think that if they have quit successfully for a few days, that having 'just one' at the pub will be ok. Unfortunately, this leads down a very slippery slope, as many people have realised. Many smokers have realised that having 'just one' will lead to them relapsing. Try your hardest to not have any at all, and rather than think 'I am not allowed to smoke ever again', try to take it day by day, or even hour by hour if that helps! Every hour that you are not smoking, you are one step closer to your goal of being an ex-smoker

I'm only a social smoker – that's not going to damage my health at all

Actually, research has shown that the risks of having the odd cigarette here and there can increase your risk for health problems, including most types of cancer. However, if you are a social smoker, the good news is that you are more likely to be successful in your quit attempt.

If I quit, I'll get fat

Whilst it is true that reducing smoking may increase your appetite, many people successfully quit smoking without putting on weight. There is absolutely no evidence that shows that those who smoke have a lean, muscular and trim body! Smoking has been found to reduce your metabolism by about 100-200 calories each day. That is roughly around 1-2 slices of bread.

Using food to replace smoking will especially have an affect on your waistline. However, having a regular diet and exercise plan will help you to achieve your goals, and become healthier overall. Rather than turning to food, drinking plenty of water and eating healthy snacks, as well as chewing sugar-free chewing gum will help to manage your waistline. It will also help to manage any withdrawal constipation that you might experience.

Bringing in a daily exercise programme will also help you to burn those unwanted calories. For example, brisk walking for 30 minutes can burn 100-200 calories. For more information, talk to your smoking advisor or the Physical Health Specialist at the Trust.

I'll never be able to enjoy the things as much as I used to without a cigarette

This is a learned behaviour, and because it is learned, we are absolutely able to unlearn it. There are millions of people in the world who have never smoked a cigarette who get pleasure from the things they do. There are also plenty of ex smokers who have gone down the same journey as you, who find pleasure in things. In fact, many ex smokers find situations even more fun without the cigarette holding them back!

Smoking is the only thing that calms me down when I am stressed or anxious

Many people think that smoking helps them to relax. This is simply not true. In fact, if anything, smoking places a great amount of stress on the body: it raises the heart rate, increases cortisol production (our stress hormone), and reduces the amount of oxygen that our body is receiving.

Nicotine creates an immediate sense of relaxation, so people believe that smoking reduces stress and anxiety. But nicotine only lasts in the body for so long, which leads to withdrawal symptoms and the need to have another cigarette. Smoking again reduces the nicotine withdrawal, and the cycle continues.

As a smoker, you are also more likely to have to exit the situation that is causing you stress to go for a smoke, as smoking is not permitted indoors in public buildings anymore. By leaving the situation and walking outside, you are separating your mind and body from the situation that might be causing you stress for 5 or 10 minutes, often allowing you to have a chat with your friend. You are able to get the exact same effect if you were to just walk outside and take in a few deep breaths of fresh air for the same time.

Smoking helps me to manage my low mood and depression

In the UK, smoking rates are about as twice as high in comparison to those who do not have the condition. When we smoke, nicotine releases the chemical dopamine in the brain. Dopamine is a chemical that helps us to feel pleasure, positive feelings and feel good overall. Dopamine is often a chemical that is found to be low in people with depression, therefore people with depression or low mood might be more likely to smoke as they find that it helps them manage their low mood.

However, smoking actually stops your brain from making its own dopamine, so over time, the amount of dopamine in your body decreases, which in turn makes people smoke more. Therefore, by quitting smoking, you are allowing your natural levels of dopamine to increase again, therefore improving your low mood.

A healthy diet and exercise regime will counteract any of the effects of smoking

Unfortunately, no amount of weightlifting, jogging, or eating homemade organic soup will help to counteract the effects that smoking has on your body. The protection you get from a healthy lifestyle does not count for much in comparison to the damage that smoking has on your body.

Do you have a question here that isn't listed? Speak to your advisor or to the Trust's Physical Health Specialist to get further advice and information.

Managing cravings

One of the issues that people face when quitting smoking are the cravings that they get. The bad news? The cravings are often intense and can be challenging to overcome. The good news? They are often short lived, only for 5-10 minutes, and your cravings will reduce over time, eventually going away forever.

Cravings happen because your body has been so used to getting regular hits of nicotine, and it is no longer getting them. There usually tends to be 2 types of craving that people have:

- 1) The steady and constant craving in the background for a cigarette. This type of craving tends to go away after around 2-3 weeks of quitting.
- 2) Sudden intense bursts to smoke. These types of cravings often happen when there is a trigger, e.g. when someone has had a few drinks, or is feeling emotional, or even if they are used to having a cigarette at a certain time of day, such as in the morning with a cup of tea or coffee. These urges also reduce over time, but the intensity can remain strong for some months. Over time, the intensity does also get less, and for the most part, disappears.

How do I manage cravings?

The most effective way to manage cravings is to use NRT products or an e-cigarette.

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)

NRT products have been shown to double your chances of quitting successfully. There are many types of NRT products available, all with varying strengths. Speak to your stop smoking advisor or the Physical Health Specialist at the Trust to see which one would benefit you the most.

Types of NRT available:

- Patches
- Gum
- Inhalator
- Nasal spray
- Lozenges

E-cigarettes

E-cigarettes in the UK are tightly regulated and monitored for safety and quality. They don't carry the same risk as smoking a cigarette, but they are also not completely risk-free. The liquid and vapour does contain some potentially harmful chemicals also found in cigarette smoke, but at much lower levels.

While nicotine is the addictive substance in cigarettes, the substance itself is relatively harmless. The vast majority of harm from smoking actually comes from the thousands of chemicals found in a cigarette, many of which are toxic.

There have also been reports of e-cigarettes catching fire. Although all e-cigarettes sold within licensed shops in the UK have been tested for quality and safety, it is still important for you to manage the risk as you would do with anything that is re-chargeable.

So far, there has been no evidence to suggest that e-cigarette vapour is dangerous to others around you. This is opposite to the evidence found in normal cigarettes, where passive smoking has been found to be very harmful to the health of others.

In order to get the most out of an e-cigarette, you must completely quit smoking and you must also be using the right strength of nicotine, in the right way. Speak to a local specialist vape shop, your Stop Smoking Advisor, or the Physical Health Specialist at the Trust for more information.

Advice to manage cravings

- When a craving hits, immediately stop what you are doing, and switch to doing something different if you can. Leave the situation if you are able to, go for a walk, climb some stairs, go to the loo, have a glass of water, and take a few low deep breaths.
- Physical activity helps to manage cravings. Deep breathing through your nose and out through your mouth helps. Make sure that you drink plenty of water to flush the nicotine out from your system and try to eat a diet that is healthy.
- Try to identify and avoid triggers. You will notice that in certain places and at certain times, you will want a cigarette more. E.g. lots of people have a 'morning cigarette' or tend to smoke after a meal. Perhaps you smoke when you are driving, or waiting for a bus or train. Maybe you are more likely to smoke when you are out with friends, or when you take the dog for a walk. Identify and notice your pattern, and have a plan in place to manage that.
- Reduce your caffeine. Caffeine can make you feel more anxious and shaky –which will therefore make you more likely to smoke. Try to reduce the amount you are having.
- Instead of smoking after meals, get up and go for a walk, or chew some gum.
- Practice relaxation techniques. Exercises like deep breathing, visualisation and mindfulness can all help with trying to manage cravings. Deep breathing is an easy exercise to do – breathe in for a count of four, hold for 2, and breathe out slowly through your mouth for a count of 8. Listening to relaxing music, going for a long walk or even taking time to look out of the window can help.
- Get plenty of rest. If you are more rested, you will feel less stressed. If you are using NRT and you don't use a patch through the night, keep the patch next to your bed so that you can use it as soon as you wake up in the morning.
- Stay strong! Whatever you do, do not give into that craving. One cigarette absolutely will hurt, so try to do anything you can to not smoke.
- If you do smoke, don't be too hard on yourself. Get up, dust yourself off and start quitting again straight away, and congratulate yourself for doing so!

- Try quitting with someone else. A quit buddy can help you to feel motivated when you are struggling, and you can repay the favour!
- Talk to your local stop smoking service. Make sure that you keep your appointments and talk to them or the national helpline if you need support immediately.

Further resources

Tavistock and Portman's Living Well Service

Advice and information on where to get further support to help and improve your physical health

<https://tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/care-and-treatment/treatments/physical-health/>

email: physicalhealthlead@tavi-port.nhs.uk

NHS Smoke free

The free national stop smoking service by the NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree>

Breathe Stop Smoking

Free stop smoking service, in Camden and Islington

<https://www.breathestopsmoking.org/>

Smokefree Hackney

Free stop smoking service, in Hackney

<https://www.smokefreehackney.org/>

Please also talk to your clinician or the Physical Health Specialist Practitioner at the Trust for further advice and information on stopping smoking.