

## SMOKING AND HEART DISEASE

HOW TO STOP SMOKING  
**AND** REDUCE YOUR RISK  
OF HEART DISEASE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Check where applicable*

- Think about your own reasons for smoking.**
- Weigh the “pros” and “cons” of quitting smoking.**
- Prepare to quit smoking:**
  - Look at your past quit attempts.
  - Set a stop date.
  - Keep a smoking diary.
  - Figure out your “triggers” to smoke and ways to cope with them.
  - Find a support person.
  - Make plans for your first day without cigarettes.
- Quit smoking:**
  - Use the 4 Ds when cravings hit:
    - ✗ Do something else
    - ✗ Delay
    - ✗ Deep breathing
    - ✗ Drink water
  - Use positive self-talk.
  - Reward yourself.
- Stay smoke-free:**
  - Take it one day at a time.
  - Practise relaxation every day.
  - Limit caffeine and alcohol.
- Take your medication for smoking cessation (gum, patch or pill).**
- Be active.**
- Eat a healthy diet.**

# SOME IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT SMOKING AND HEART DISEASE

*Smokers are 2 to 3 times more likely to develop heart disease than non-smokers.*

*Up to 3 out of 4 smokers think of quitting smoking.*

## ABOUT THIS PAMPHLET

This is for you. It will help you understand your smoking, and help you quit smoking when you are ready. Quitting smoking is a process, and there are stages on the road to being smoke-free. This pamphlet will tell you about the stages of quitting smoking, and give you lots of practical tips. Read the next section to find out what part is for you. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to quit - just the way that works for you.

### What stage are you at?

1.  I'm not thinking about quitting, certainly not in the next six months. See Section One.
2.  I'm thinking about quitting someday, but not right now. See Section Two.
3.  I want to quit within the next month, and I want to know more about how to do it. See Section Three.
4.  I've just quit and I'm having withdrawal symptoms. See Section Four.
5.  I've quit smoking and I want to know more about staying that way. See Section Five.

## SECTION ONE

### I'M NOT READY TO QUIT SMOKING

In this section, you will learn more about your smoking - why you smoke, and how you feel about it.

#### WHY DO YOU SMOKE?

**Here are some common reasons for smoking:**

- ✗ I'm only smoking a few cigarettes a day - that's not dangerous.
- ✗ I'm too addicted to quit.
- ✗ Smoking helps me relax when I'm stressed.
- ✗ Smoking keeps me from gaining weight.

### THE FIVE COMPONENTS OF SMOKING

Smoking has a very powerful hold on people, partly because people smoke for a number of reasons:

**Physical addiction:** Nicotine is the substance in cigarettes that is physically addicting. Nicotine is more addictive than alcohol, cocaine or heroin. With every puff on a cigarette, a "hit" of nicotine reaches your brain within seven seconds. Some of the cravings you have for cigarettes, like when you get up in the morning, are a physical reaction to low levels of nicotine in your body.

**Physical habit:** Each puff of a cigarette helps to create a strong “hand-to-mouth” habit. For example, if you puff each cigarette 10 times and smoke a pack a day, you would be repeating this hand-to-mouth motion 250 times a day, or over 90,000 times a year.

**Emotional support:** Smokers think of cigarettes like good friends that support them through the bad times and boost their enjoyment of the good times.

**Personal identity:** Many people see smoking as a big part of who they are. Because smoking can be this central to your very being, it can have a strong hold on your life.

**Social habit:** If you always have a cigarette with your morning coffee, or when you’re in a bar, you’ve trained yourself, without even realizing it, to smoke in certain situations.

## THINKING ABOUT YOUR SMOKING

Now that you know more about reasons people smoke, it’s time to think about your own smoking. You may have valid, important reasons to smoke. But they’re only half the story. Now take some time to think about what harm, inconvenience, or discomfort smoking brings you. If you can now imagine quitting some time in the future, think about the following questions:

- ✗ Why do I smoke?
- ✗ What does smoking really mean to me?
- ✗ Why might I want to quit smoking?
- ✗ Do I want to smoke for the rest of my life?

---

## SECTION TWO

### I’M THINKING OF QUITTING

Bravo! This section will help you make the decision to stop. The goal is to move from thinking about quitting to being ready to quit.

**Here are some tips:**

- Pay attention to everything you hear about smoking.
- Keep track of your reasons to quit.
- Think of the many things you would enjoy more if you quit smoking.

### TO QUIT OR NOT TO QUIT

The biggest task in deciding to quit is weighing the “pros” and “cons” of smoking. You need to understand the “pros” - what you like about smoking, what you get out of it, and how important these things are to you. On the other side of the coin, you need to think hard about the “cons” - the costs of smoking, and how important these are in your life.

### QUITTING: WEIGH YOUR “PROS” AND “CONS”

Now it’s time for you to list your “pros” and “cons” for quitting. Rate each one from 1-5 (1 is the least important and 5 the most important).

**Here are some things to think about:**

- your health
- your self-image
- money
- your social life
- the environment
- your family’s health
- what your family and friends think
- how you cope with stress

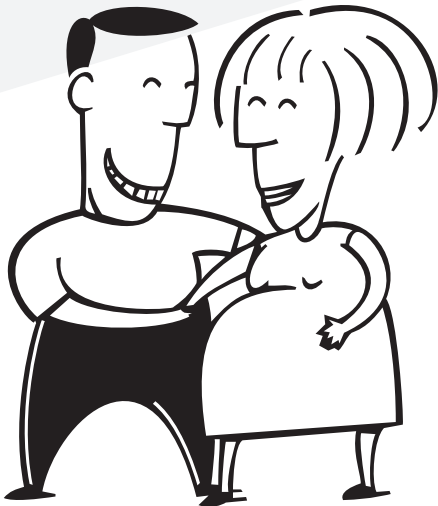
## SMOKING CAN HURT

While many smokers feel fit and healthy, the truth is smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in Canada. Smoking kills 45,000 people a year.

## SOME PROBLEMS CAUSED BY SMOKING

- ✗ twice the normal risk of heart attack and stroke
- ✗ more than 90% of lung cancers and other lung diseases (chronic bronchitis, emphysema)
- ✗ 30% of all cancers
- ✗ decreased physical endurance
- ✗ health problems for children and other family members from second-hand smoke
- ✗ impotence in men

Women who take birth control pills and smoke are at a greatly increased risk of a stroke. In addition, when pregnant women smoke, they have a much greater chance of losing the baby, of having a baby with a low birth weight, of later developmental problems for their babies, or sudden infant death.



## BENEFITS OF QUITTING

Quitting smoking lowers many health risks very quickly. If you quit, here are only a few of the benefits:

### PHYSICAL

- ✗ your risk of cancer and heart disease will go down
- ✗ stress on your heart will be reduced
- ✗ your loved ones will not be harmed by your smoke
- ✗ your smoker's cough will most probably disappear

### SOCIAL

- ✗ you will be the one in control - cigarettes will no longer control you
- ✗ your self-image and self-confidence will improve
- ✗ you'll be a healthier parent for your children, now and in the future
- ✗ you'll have more money to spend on other things

**If your “pros” of quitting outweigh your “cons,”** congratulations! Now you can take the next step - making plans to quit. Read the next section to help you.

**If your “cons” of quitting outweigh your “pros,”** you now know some of your reasons to quit smoking, and you know they are not strong enough yet. You may be ignoring messages about the dangers of smoking. You may need to pay more attention to your smoking and how it affects your health and that of others. Think about the glamorous, healthy people in cigarette ads and ask yourself if these images are accurate. Notice the pollution cigarettes create. Think of the risk of fire. Try to be more open to the evidence that smoking is dangerous. **Above all, recognize that you do have what it takes to go one more step.**

# SECTION THREE

## I'M GETTING READY TO QUIT

Preparing to quit smoking takes time and effort. Follow this section through, step by step, and you'll be further down the road to quitting.

## LOOK AT YOUR PAST ATTEMPTS

Most smokers don't quit the first time they try. It takes many attempts to learn the skills of living without cigarettes. If you've tried to quit in the past, take a look at what happened and how you can avoid problems.

## DECIDE ON A STOP DATE

It's important to pick a firm date when you are going to stop smoking. That will be your first day with no cigarettes. Set the date a week or two from now.

## KEEP A SMOKING DIARY

A smoking diary is a great way to become more aware of your smoking habits. It tracks the cigarettes you smoke, and helps you find out when and where you smoke, as well as how you feel at the time.

Make a smoking diary and fill it in for every cigarette you smoke over the next two or three days. For each cigarette, you will need to record the time of day, what you are doing, where you are and why you are smoking.

## KNOW WHAT MAKES YOU WANT TO SMOKE

One of the things your smoking diary can do is help you figure out what "triggers" you to smoke. These are the places, people, moods and activities that give you the urge to smoke. Here are some common triggers:

- alcohol
- the end of mealtimes
- fear of weight gain
- emotional stress
- others' smoking
- coffee



To quit, you need to plan how to cope with these triggers. The following are several ways:

**Avoidance:** The easiest way is simply to stay away from the triggers for the first few weeks. Don't go to the smoking room for your break. Sit in non-smoking sections in restaurants. Drink less alcohol. Don't tempt yourself.

**Change routine:** If you always smoke when you first wake up or right after lunch, change your routine. Jump in the shower to wake up. Take a quick walk after lunch. The urge usually lasts only three to five minutes, so think of things to keep yourself busy during these times.

**Plan to cope:** You're not going to be able to avoid all your triggers, so plan beforehand how you will deal with them. Think about:

- ✗ calling a buddy for support
- ✗ singing along to the radio
- ✗ taking a walk
- ✗ chewing sugarless gum

**Find a support person:** Consider asking your close friends and family to help you. Here are some things they can do: not smoke in the house or car; be a telephone buddy; be an exercise partner; agree to spend time with you.

## PLAN TO HANDLE THE “SIDE EFFECTS” OF QUITTING

### NICOTINE WITHDRAWAL

These symptoms won't last long. They are usually at their worst during the first three or four days after you quit smoking. And remember, these symptoms are also a sign that your body is beginning to heal!

### SOME SYMPTOMS OF NICOTINE WITHDRAWAL

- ✗ anxiety, irritability
- ✗ restlessness, nervousness
- ✗ difficulty concentrating
- ✗ severe craving
- ✗ difficulty sleeping
- ✗ increased hunger and eating
- ✗ headaches

**Here are two questions to figure out if you're likely to have trouble with nicotine withdrawal:**

Do you want a cigarette within 30 minutes after you wake up in the morning?

- Yes                       No

Do you smoke more than 10 cigarettes in a day?

- Yes                         No

If you answered yes to both, you are considered heavily addicted to nicotine and more likely to have trouble with nicotine withdrawal. Speak to your doctor about the nicotine patch or gum or the smoking cessation aid available in tablet form.

### PLANNING CHECKLIST

Make sure you've thought about each of these parts of your plan. Have you:

- found some lessons in past quit attempts?
- figured out your triggers, and ways to cope with them?
- found a support person?
- talked to your physician about medication (gum, patch or pill) to help you manage the withdrawal symptoms?
- set a Stop Date?
- made sure you have plans for your first day without cigarettes?

**You've come a long way, and you're ready!**

---

## SECTION FOUR

### I'M QUITTING

This is your first day without cigarettes - you should be proud! Your goal for today is to keep yourself busy and feeling good without a cigarette. For the next two weeks, treat every day as if it is your Stop Date. Keep busy, keep away from cigarettes, and reward yourself for your efforts.

### KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

The main things you can expect during your first two weeks are withdrawal symptoms, cravings and signs of recovery. Knowing what to expect can build your confidence so that you can deal with quitting.

### WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

You may want to re-read the part in Section Three on nicotine dependence and withdrawal symptoms. Cravings will try to wreck the plans you've made to deal with your triggers to smoke. Don't give in! Use the 4 Ds when the cravings hit.

- Do something else
- Delay
- Deep breathing
- Drink water

## SIGNS OF RECOVERY

Restlessness, more energy, and coughing are signs that your body is healing! Look at withdrawal as “recovery in disguise” - it may make it easier to get through!

## USE POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Even though you want to quit smoking, there will be times when you doubt that it's a good idea. It's very difficult for people to change - especially when it's something as hard as quitting smoking. Having doubts is normal. It's always possible to talk yourself out of your doubts if you work at it.

## REWARD YOURSELF

Give yourself rewards all along the way. The benefits of not smoking are mostly long-term, so you need to treat yourself now. Rewards don't have to be expensive, but you may want to use money you have saved by not smoking to get yourself a special reward.

You are about to move to the last stage - staying stopped. Congratulations for getting this far, and keep up the super work!

---

# SECTION FIVE

## I'M SMOKE-FREE - AND GOING STRONG!

The challenge is to stay stopped. For most people, it takes awhile before they FEEL like non-smokers. The good news is that it gets easier. The physical addiction will fade, you will get more skilled at coping with urges, the urges will get weaker, and slowly you will begin to see yourself as a non-smoker.

The challenge is to remain a non-smoker for good. Remember:

- ✘ Your reasons for quitting.
- ✘ Your old smoking habits are still part of you. Don't forget how strong they can be.
- ✘ A slip (puffing on a cigarette) does **not** make you a smoker again. It's smoking the next ones that causes big trouble. Look at a slip as a warning and a signal that you need a way to handle that kind of situation. Learn from it.

## DEALING WITH STRESS

Stress is a big reason for starting to smoke again. You can learn how to handle stress without smoking. Your job is to manage the stress that smoking used to help you cope with and also manage the stress of quitting smoking.

### Here are some tips:

- Take it one day at a time.
- Get active.
- Limit caffeine (coffee, tea, cola beverages, chocolate) because it can produce anxiety, irritability and heartburn.
- Relax. Relaxation reduces stress, especially if you practise it every day, not just when the need arises. The following is a classic relaxation exercise that is easy to do:

*Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted for at least 15 minutes, and get comfortable.*

*Close your eyes, and let your breathing go into a calm, comfortable rhythm. Breathe in slowly through your nose, and breathe out slowly through your mouth.*

*Try repeating a comfortable phrase to yourself such as “I am relaxed” or imagine yourself in a place you find relaxing.*

*Place one hand on your abdomen and teach yourself to breathe from your abdomen rather than just from your chest. As you inhale, gently push your abdomen outward to expand the bottom of your lungs. When you exhale, gently pull in your abdomen.*

*When you're ready to stop, take a slow, deep breath in, hold it for four seconds, and exhale with a slow, deep sigh. Enjoy letting go of any tension you have left. Do this three or four*



*times. Then, shift your body around and gently stretch your legs and arms. Open your eyes. You could also listen to music, get a backrub, or talk to someone who's a good listener. There are also several self-help books for stress management that provide many good ideas for dealing with stress.*

## WEIGHT GAIN

Weight gain is one of the biggest concerns of people. It's also a major reason ex-smokers start smoking again. Many add no more than 4.5 kilograms (10 pounds). A healthy attitude about your weight is important in dealing with weight gain.

Many people quit smoking without a lot of weight gain. You need to find ways to deal with quitting that don't involve eating more, and to be more active! The more active you are, the more calories you will burn, and the less chance you will have of gaining weight.

## THE ACTIVITY FACTOR

You can replace cigarettes with regular activity.

- Look for 5- to 15-minute periods when you can be active.
- Take a walk break instead of a coffee break.
- Go for a walk with a friend instead of sitting down for a chat.
- Bike or walk instead of driving your car. If you want to start an exercise program, remember to talk to your doctor first. Start slowly with whatever you choose and don't overdo it!



Également disponible en français sous le titre « La trousse coeur en santé »

This publication is also available on Internet at the following address: [www.healthyheartkit.com](http://www.healthyheartkit.com)

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, represented by the Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1999.  
Cat N°: H39-460/1-1999E  
ISBN: 0-662-27527-6

## HEALTHY EATING HELPS

Healthy eating is important for quitting smoking without gaining weight. Food tastes better when you're no longer smoking. Reduce portion sizes and choose to eat the right things:

- ✗ plenty of fruit, vegetables, bread, pasta and beans
- ✗ lean meat, poultry and fish
- ✗ 2%, 1%, or skim milk dairy products
- ✗ less sauces and fats such as butter
- ✗ less salt and sugar
- ✗ low-calorie snacks such as fruit, vegetables and on occasion, unbuttered airpopped popcorn

## THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Look to the future as a non-smoker, one day at a time. Think positively about how you are doing and about how proud you are as a non-smoker.

There are resources in your community to help you quit smoking and control other risk factors for heart disease. For more information, contact the organizations below (at no charge):

- Cancer Information Service, Canadian Cancer Society: 1-888-939-3333
- Heart and Stroke Foundation: 1-888-HSF-INFO (473-4636) or [www.hsf.ca](http://www.hsf.ca)
- Lung Association: 1-888-566-LUNG (5864) or [www.on.lung.ca](http://www.on.lung.ca)
- National Clearinghouse on Tobacco and Health: 1-800-267-5234 or [www.cctc.ca/ncth](http://www.cctc.ca/ncth)

*Smoking and Heart Disease* is a condensed version of *Your Guide to a Smoke Free Future*, developed by the Canadian Council for Tobacco Control (1996).

"The Healthy Heart Kit" is sponsored by Health Canada in partnership with The College of Family Physicians of Canada; Unité Santé physique, Direction de la santé publique, Régie régionale de la Santé et des Services sociaux de Montréal-Centre; and Heart and Stroke Foundations of Canada and Quebec.

Sponsored by:



Health  
Canada

Santé  
Canada