



Wellness News Network™

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Reasons & Tips for Quitting Smoking

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Introduction

Smoking, especially cigarette smoking, is the leading preventable cause of death worldwide. According to the World Health Organization, over 5 million people die from prolonged tobacco use every year and this number is expected to jump to 8 million by 2030.¹ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention adds that smokers, on average, live 13 to 14 fewer years than nonsmokers.² Smoking cessation, or quitting smoking, is one of the most important health behaviour changes you can make and it has long-term health and quality of life implications for you and the people around you. Your chiropractor can counsel you on the smoking cessation strategies that are most appropriate for you.



Why Quitting is Important

Quitting smoking is important both for longevity and for ensuring that your later years are healthy, quality ones. Besides the obvious risk for cancer - lung, bladder, kidney, pancreas, among others - and lung diseases, including emphysema and chronic bronchitis, smokers are more likely than nonsmokers to develop other health problems as well. The American Cancer Society states that smokers are twice as likely as nonsmokers to experience fatal heart attacks and that smoking is a major risk factor for blood vessel diseases.³ Other health problems associated with smoking include erectile dysfunction in men, an increased likelihood of miscarriage in pregnant women and macular degeneration - a leading cause of blindness in older individuals.

Long-Term & Immediate Benefits

A 2007 study published in the journal Current Cardiovascular Risk Reports states that smoking cessation significantly decreases the risk for cardiovascular disease and death in a wide range of populations, and that smoking cessation considerably boosts both life expectancy and quality of life.⁴ Some benefits of smoking cessation are immediate, however, including better smelling breath, clothes and hair; disappearance of stains on your teeth, fingers and fingernails; improved sense of taste and smell and improved ability to perform your activities of daily

QUESTION:

How many million people will die every year from prolonged tobacco use?

- A) 30 million
- B) 40 million
- C) 50 million

ANSWER:

C) 50 million

TRUE OR FALSE:

Within days of your final cigarette your blood pressure and heart rate go down

ANSWER:

False – within **minutes** of your final cigarette

QUESTION:

Which of the following are **some** of the benefits of quitting smoking?

- A) less risk of cancer
- B) better activity performance
- C) less risk of heart disease
- D) all of the above

ANSWER:

D) all of the above

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living, including housework and stair climbing. Within minutes after your final cigarette, your blood pressure and heart rate go down and within hours, the amount of carbon monoxide and oxygen in your bloodstream returns to normal levels.

Tip #1: Engage in Regular Exercise



Engaging in regular exercise may be useful in helping you quit smoking. According to a 2000 study published in the journal *Addiction*, several research trials yielded a positive effect for exercise on smoking abstinence.⁵ Exercise, including both endurance and strength training, produces numerous beneficial health results including weight loss, improved stamina, enhanced sense of well-being, heightened sense of self-esteem and accomplishment and improved mood. Changing your routine by adding regular bouts of exercise can help shift your attention away from your nicotine cravings and toward more healthy habits.

Tip #2: Manage Your Stress



Nicotine dependence is the primary reason that most smokers continue smoking, though most people who smoke, notes a 2007 study published in the *British Medical Journal*, cite stress relief as a main factor for smoking.⁶ Finding alternative ways to manage your stress can be helpful for smoking cessation. Healthy, natural ways to manage your stress include getting regular massages, practicing movement arts such as yoga or tai chi, listening to relaxing music, spending time in nature, practicing breathing exercises and visualization, getting adequate sleep and maintaining your regularly scheduled visits with your chiropractor.

Tip #3: Balance Your Blood Sugar Levels



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services states that chemicals found in tobacco smoke complicate blood sugar regulation.⁷ Nicotine boosts the amount of glucose in your blood by increasing the flow of epinephrine, a stimulating hormone. Alterations in your blood sugar levels may affect your mood and anxiety levels and your ability to successfully combat your nicotine cravings and quit smoking. Successful smoking cessation may require balancing your blood sugar levels. Ask your chiropractor about healthy dietary strategies, including dietary and herbal supplements that can help stabilize your blood sugar levels before, during and after you quit smoking.

Quote to Inspire

“Giving up smoking is the easiest thing in the world. I know because I’ve done it thousands of times.”

Mark Twain

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