



## About Quitting Smoking

- Tobacco use can lead to tobacco/nicotine dependence and serious health problems. **Quitting smoking greatly reduces the risk of developing smoking-related diseases.**
- Tobacco/nicotine dependence is a condition that often requires repeated treatments, but **there are helpful treatments and resources for quitting.**
- Smokers can and do quit smoking. In fact, **today there are more former smokers than current smokers**

### Nicotine Dependence

- Most smokers become addicted to nicotine, a drug that is found naturally in tobacco.
- More people in the United States are addicted to nicotine than to any other drug. Research suggests that nicotine may be as addictive as heroin, cocaine, or alcohol.
- Quitting smoking is hard and may require several attempts. People who stop smoking often start again because of withdrawal symptoms, stress, and weight gain.
- Nicotine withdrawal symptoms may include:
  - Feeling irritable, angry, or anxious
  - Having trouble thinking
  - Craving tobacco products
  - Feeling hungrier than usual

### Health Benefits of Quitting

Tobacco smoke contains a deadly mix of more than 7,000 chemicals; hundreds are harmful, and about 70 can cause cancer. Smoking increases the risk for serious health problems, many diseases, and death.

People who stop smoking greatly reduce their risk for disease and early death. Although the health benefits are greater for people who stop at earlier ages, there are benefits at any age. **You are never too old to quit.**

### Stopping smoking is associated with the following health benefits:

- Lowered risk for lung cancer and many other types of cancer.
- Reduced risk for heart disease, stroke, and peripheral vascular disease (narrowing of the blood vessels outside your heart).
- Reduced heart disease risk within 1 to 2 years of quitting.



- Reduced respiratory symptoms, such as coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. While these symptoms may not disappear, they do not continue to progress at the same rate among people who quit compared with those who continue to smoke.
- Reduced risk of developing some lung diseases (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, also known as COPD, one of the leading causes of death in the United States).
- Reduced risk for infertility in women of childbearing age. Women who stop smoking during pregnancy also reduce their risk of having a low birth weight baby.

### **Smokers' Attempts to Quit**

**Among all current U.S. adult cigarette smokers, nearly 7 out of every 10 (68.8%) reported in 2010 that they wanted to quit completely.**

- Since 2002, the number of former smokers has been greater than the number of current smokers.

**Percentage of adult daily cigarette smokers who stopped smoking for more than 1 day in 2012 because they were trying to quit:**

- More than 4 out of 10 (**42.7%**) of all **adult** smokers
- Nearly 5 out of 10 (**48.5%**) smokers aged **18–24** years
- More than 4 out of 10 (**46.8%**) smokers aged **25–44** years
- Nearly 4 out of 10 (**38.8%**) smokers aged **45–64** years
- More than 3 out of 10 (**34.6%**) smokers aged **65 years or older**

**Percentage of high school cigarette smokers who tried to stop smoking in the past 12 months:**

- Nearly 5 out of 10 (**48%**) of all high school students who smoke

### **Ways to Quit Smoking**

**Most former smokers quit without using one of the treatments that scientific research has shown can work.**

**However, the following treatments are proven to be effective for smokers who want help to quit:**

- Brief help by a doctor (such as when a doctor takes 10 minutes or less to give a patient advice and assistance about quitting)
- Individual, group, or telephone counseling



- Behavioral therapies (such as training in problem solving)
- Treatments with more person-to-person contact and more intensity (such as more or longer counseling sessions)
- Programs to deliver treatments using mobile phones

**Medications for quitting that have been found to be effective include the following:**

- Nicotine replacement products
  - Over-the-counter (nicotine patch [which is also available by prescription], gum, lozenge)
  - Prescription (nicotine patch, inhaler, nasal spray)
- Prescription non-nicotine medications: bupropion SR (Zyban®), varenicline tartrate (Chantix®)

**Counseling and medication are both effective for treating tobacco dependence, and using them together is more effective than using either one alone.**

- More information is needed about quitting for people who smoke cigarettes and also use other types of tobacco

Helpful Resources

**Quitline Services**

**Call [1-800-QUIT-NOW](tel:1-800-QUIT-NOW) (1-800-784-8669) if you want help quitting.** This is a **free** telephone support service that can help people who want to stop smoking or using tobacco. Callers are routed to their state quitlines, which offer several types of quit information and services. These may include:

- Free support, advice, and counseling from experienced quitline coaches
- A personalized quit plan
- Practical information on how to quit, including ways to cope with nicotine withdrawal
- The latest information about stop-smoking medications
- Free or discounted medications (available for at least some callers in most states)
- Referrals to other resources
- Mailed self-help materials



### Online Help

Get free help online, too.

- For information on quitting, go to the [Quit Smoking Resources](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/how_to_quit/resources/index.htm)([http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit\\_smoking/how\\_to\\_quit/resources/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/how_to_quit/resources/index.htm)) page on CDC's Smoking & Tobacco Use Web site.
- Read inspiring stories about former smokers and their reasons for quitting at CDC's [Tips From Former Smokers](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/)(<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/>) Web site.
- The [I'm Ready to Quit!](#) page links to many helpful resources