

# My Health Account™

A New Look at Why I Smoke  
and How to Quit



## Health Account

This account will help me keep a record of my health. I will talk to my health care provider about my diary at each visit.

I will ask my health care provider:

- Do I have any health problems NOW because of smoking?
- What health problems will I have if I keep smoking?
- What can I do to quit smoking?

## My account information:



Date account opened \_\_\_\_\_

Account holder's name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Health care provider's name \_\_\_\_\_

Health care provider's number \_\_\_\_\_

## How much do I spend on my cigarettes?



Smoking is an expensive habit. I will keep track of how much I spend on cigarettes for 1 week.

Date	# of Packs	How Much I Spent
6/1/05	2	\$13.00

Date	# of Packs	How Much I Spent
Total:		

## Health Account Tip #1

Smoking is the number one preventable cause of premature death in the United States. Smoking may cause lung cancer and many other health problems. Quitting is one of the most important steps I can take to improve my health.



**AWARENESS**

# What can smoking do to my body?


## Lung Cancer

Cigarette smoking damages cells. Cell damage can lead to tumors that start in the lungs. Then lung cancer can spread to other parts of the body.



## Stroke

Smoking makes it easier for clots to form. The clots can block the flow of blood. A stroke happens when blood can't get to the brain.



**COPD (Includes  
Emphysema and  
Bronchitis)**

COPD, which stands for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, is a group of lung conditions. COPD makes it hard to breathe. It may get slowly worse as damage to the lung evolves.

**If I stop smoking today...I CAN lower my risk of lung cancer, stroke, and COPD.**

# What can smoking do to my body?



## Coronary Heart Disease

Cigarette smoking narrows the blood vessels and can cause the heart to work harder.



## Cervical Cancer

Smoking is linked to cervical cancer.



## Also...

Women who smoke and take birth control pills are over 13½ times more likely to have a heart attack. Women who do not smoke and take birth control pills have less chance of a heart attack.

If I stop smoking today...I CAN lower my risk of cervical cancer.  
I can also help keep my heart healthy.

## When can the benefits of quitting smoking be seen?

24 Hours  
After  
Quitting

**The chance of  
having a heart  
attack begins  
to decrease!**

2  
Weeks to 3  
Months After  
Quitting

**Blood circulation  
and lung function  
may improve!**

1 to  
9 Months  
After  
Quitting

**The lungs can  
start to clean  
themselves again!**

**1 Year  
After  
Quitting**

**The risk of a heart attack is now half the risk of when I smoked!**

**5+ Years  
After  
Quitting**

**The risk of having a stroke is lowered to that of a person who never smoked.**

**10 Years  
After  
Quitting**

**The risk of getting lung cancer is reduced!**

## Why It's So Hard to Quit

Smoking is 2 things at the same time:

- **Habit**
  - doing things the same way over and over when I smoke
- **Craving**
  - wanting or needing a cigarette
  - feeling anxious when I don't have one



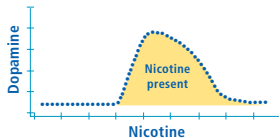
## Habits Are Hard to Break

My brain expects a cigarette when I do certain activities. Doing that activity can trigger a desire for a smoke. It is then very hard to do that activity without smoking.

- “Every time I make a phone call, I have a smoke”
- “I smoke when I am stressed at work”
- “I smoke when I’m waiting at the bus stop”
- “I don’t know what to do with my hands if I’m not holding a cigarette”

# Craving Comes From Brain Chemistry

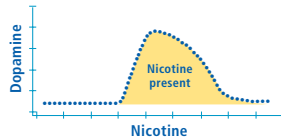
- 1 Smoking sends nicotine to the brain in a few seconds. Nicotine causes the brain to release dopamine (dope-a-meen).
- 2 Dopamine is a chemical in the brain that makes you feel calm.



3 Between cigarettes, the level of dopamine drops. Then, you start getting crabby and jumpy.

4 Your brain craves nicotine to release more dopamine.

5 Smoking again sends nicotine to the brain in a few seconds.



## Effects of Cigarette Smoking

I want to remember that nicotine in cigarettes has the potential to be addictive.

Smoking cigarettes:

- may damage my heart
- may be linked to cancer
- has a stimulating and calming effect at the same time
- reduces my appetite, which may keep me from eating nutritious meals



## Effects of Nicotine Withdrawal

Will I feel bad when I stop smoking?

Yes, you might at first:

- not be able to go to the bathroom regularly
- cough or have sore throat
- have cravings for cigarettes
- not be able to sleep well
- have headaches
- feel dizzy and tingling
- feel hungry
- feel grumpy or short-tempered

**These effects can lesson over time as my body adjusts to the lack of nicotine!**

## Will I gain weight when I quit smoking?

- Not everybody gains weight
- Many ex-smokers gain a little
  - They gain an average of 6-8 pounds
- About 1 out of 10 people gain a lot
  - They may gain as much as 30 pounds
- If I do gain weight, I will ask my doctor for ways to lose it again
- I can limit weight gain with a healthy lifestyle
  - Eat low-calorie healthy meals
  - Exercise regularly

## Health Account Tip #2

Quitting smoking is one of the most important things I can do for my health. I will set a target date to quit smoking. I will prepare myself for this date mentally and physically. I will find the right plan for me. I will look forward to a healthier lifestyle. I will tell my friends and family that I am quitting.



**PREPARATION**

## Choosing My Quit Plan

There are many kinds of plans to quit smoking. I will talk to my health care provider about which plan will work best for me.

Some of the plans used by others are:

- **Medicines** – I will talk to my health care provider about different types of medicine
- **Individual or Group Counseling** – I will ask my health care provider and employer about programs to help me quit smoking

## The quit plan that will work best for me:



My health care provider and I choose the best plan for me to quit smoking:

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## What are my smoking habits?



I will keep track of how many times I smoke and when and why. This record will help me learn my smoking patterns. It will help me decide how to change them.

Day	Time	# of Cigarettes	What I Was Doing
Monday	8 AM	2	Smoked with my coffee

Day	Time	# of Cigarettes	What I Was Doing

**Hint: Use another piece of paper if you run out of room.**

## Setting a quit date to be smoke-free:



“Triggers” are things that make me want to smoke. They can range from stress to being around other smokers. They can also be going to a club or talking on the phone.

### ✓ Check one

- I have more triggers on weekdays
- I have more triggers on weekends

### ✓ Check one

I will quit on a  weekday or  weekend because I have fewer triggers.



## Things I will do to get ready for my quit date:



- I will mark my quit date on my calendar
- I will tell my friends and family about my quit date
- I will throw away all my lighters and cigarettes before my quit date
- I will eat sugar free candy or chew gum instead of smoking on my breaks. It will help break the routine
- I will remember that quitting smoking is a commitment and not luck**

# My timeline to be smoke-free:



Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have been smoking since...**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Year**

**My quit date is...**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Month**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Day**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Year**

**I want to quit because:**



I will list my own reasons why I want to quit smoking:

1 *I want to stay healthy for my family*

2

3

4

5

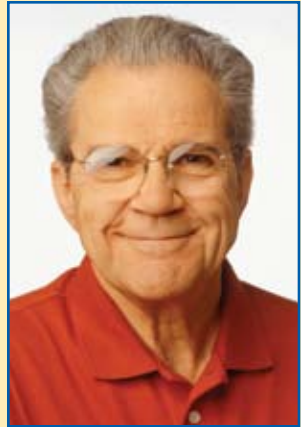
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## Quit

- I will get rid of all my cigarettes the night before my quit date. They will be out of the house and truly gone
- I will take any medicine given by my doctor
- I will practice the changes in my routine: drink plenty of water, chew gum, eat sugar free candy, exercise, go to nonsmoking areas. I will do anything to avoid the smell and smoking routine
- I will remember that the craving will pass
- I will get through each craving minute by minute

## Health Account Tip #3

I know that quitting smoking is not easy. But I know I can do it. I will change my daily behavior to adjust to my new lifestyle without smoking. To succeed, I will need to know what to expect. I also need to have a plan to deal with those hard times when they come.



**QUIT**

## If I crave a cigarette, I will try to:



- Drink plenty of water** – helps to ease my cravings
- Eat a light snack** – raw vegetables, nuts, hard candy, or sugar free gum
- Exercise\* or do hobbies** – helps keep me busy
- Breathe deeply and hold for 5 seconds** – calms my mind and body
- Refer to my list of reasons to quit** – reminds me of why I am serious about quitting

\* Check with your doctor before beginning any new exercise

## Health Account Tip #4

Maintenance, or “staying quit,” is my final and most important step to a healthier lifestyle. I will think ahead to those times when I may crave and will develop a plan. I will always remember my reason behind quitting. I will keep in mind the hard work I did to get to this point. Once I can beat my cravings, I will be able to fully enjoy all of the benefits of quitting.

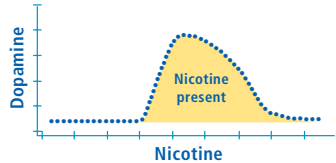


**MAINTENANCE**

## What Happens When I “Cheat”

The chemical craving stops a few days or weeks after quitting smoking.

If I have just one cigarette after I have quit, I could trigger the same cravings I had before I quit.





## Benefits

I notice these things since I quit smoking:

Since my quit date of \_\_\_\_\_

- My food tastes better!
- My breath, my clothes, and my hair and nails do not smell!

## Benefits

- I have saved money by not spending it on cigarettes!
- I have more energy and do not run out of breath easily!
- I feel more in control of myself and am not hooked on cigarettes any longer!

## “Staying Quit”

If I slip, I will not give up, I will quit again. These “slips” are the times to prepare for. If I can’t avoid them, then I will remember to:

- drink plenty of water
- eat a light snack  
or chew gum
- exercise or do hobbies
- breathe deeply and  
hold for 5 seconds
- go back to my list of  
reasons to quit!

...just like I did before!

## Maintenance: "Staying Quit"



I have been smoke-free since my quit date:  Yes  No  
If NO, I will keep track of the times I "slip."

Smoke-Free Since Date	Date I Slipped	# of Cigarettes	Why I Smoked	Next Time I Slip I Will Try To...
06-01-05	06-14-05	2	I was stressed with work.	Go for a walk around the office.

## Health Account Summary

Smoking may cause problems to my lungs and heart. I can reduce the risk of these problems by quitting smoking for good. I can succeed by:

- becoming **Aware** of the health problems caused by smoking
- setting a quit date and **Preparing** myself for it
- getting help from my health care provider to **Quit**
- knowing all of the **Benefits** of quitting and **Maintaining** my smoke-free life

