

THE TRINIDAD & TOBAGO HEART FOUNDATION'S

Guide to

THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF SMOKING & HOW TO QUIT



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
HEART FOUNDATION



**TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
HEART FOUNDATION**

About the **TRINIDAD & TOBAGO HEART FOUNDATION**

The Trinidad and Tobago Heart Foundation (TTHF) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation that focuses on educating the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago about cardiovascular disease (CVD) - also known as heart disease, advocating for healthy lifestyles to help reduce the prevalence of CVD. We promote heart health awareness, healthy lifestyles and proper dietary habits, highlighting the risk factors for CVD including hypertension (high blood pressure), obesity and smoking, in an effort to reduce the incidence of heart disease and stroke. The Trinidad and Tobago Heart Foundation (TTHF) was incorporated on 17th April 1998 and is governed by a Board of Directors which serves on a voluntary basis without any honoraria or allowances; its projects are self-financed largely from corporate sponsorship, donations from the public and fundraising activities.

Vision

A decrease in the rate of NCDs in Trinidad and Tobago, specifically Cardiovascular Disease, through the cooperation, awareness and contributions of all stakeholders in society which include government, corporate entities, NGOs and the citizens.

Mission

To assist in the prevention of Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) in Trinidad and Tobago by creating awareness of heart health, healthy lifestyles and proper dietary habits in an effort to reduce the incidence of heart disease and stroke in Trinidad and Tobago.

Our Objectives

AWARENESS: To promote healthy lifestyles to lower CVD.

EDUCATION: To educate the community on preventative avenues to sustain healthy hearts.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT: To raise funds for research and development in heart disease prevention.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: To encourage heart professionals to give of resources to community education.

COLLABORATION: To collaborate with the State (and other NCD organisations) on setting health policy matters such as food criteria, tobacco legislation and budgetary provisions to support CVD eradication.

For further information, feel free to contact us at :

OFFICE: 1-868-662-6993

EMAIL: ttheartfoundation@gmail.com

WEBSITE: www.ttheartfoundation.org



Health Effects on the Body from SMOKING

mood stimulation

Smoking can temporarily put you in a good mood, but dependence is common and withdrawal side effects like anxiety and irritability can be challenging to manage.

anxiety and irritability

You might find yourself a bit on edge if you missed your cigarette break. Nicotine withdrawal is responsible for these symptoms.

smelly hair

Tobacco smoke can stick to your clothes and hair. In fact, just being around secondhand smoke can make your hair and clothes smell.

unhealthy teeth

Yellowish or brownish stains on the teeth are telltale signs of long-term smoking. Smoking also increases your risk for infections or inflammations that can lead to tooth and bone loss.

bronchitis

Smokers have a higher rate of bronchitis. Secondhand smoking can also increase the risk for bronchitis, especially in children. Other respiratory problems such as tuberculosis and pneumonia may worsen by smoking.

persistent coughing

You know the infamous term "smoker's cough"? This is where it comes from. Damage to the airways contributes to this cough.

heart disease

Smoking is one of the well-proven lifestyle habits that contribute to heart disease. Both people who smoke and those who are regularly exposed to secondhand smoke are at higher risk for heart attacks.

high cholesterol

Tobacco smoke lowers your HDL (good) cholesterol and increases your LDL (bad) cholesterol. It also raises total cholesterol and triglycerides, which are fats in your blood.

immune system

Smoking lowers your immune system's ability to fight off infection. Smokers have more infections of the respiratory tract than people who don't smoke.

infertility

Both men and women who smoke are more likely to experience short- and long-term fertility issues than people who don't smoke.

erectile dysfunction

An erection requires adequate blood flow, but smoking can constrict your blood vessels and make this process more difficult.

diabetes complications

Type 2 diabetes tends to progress more rapidly in people who smoke, because smoking increases the amount of insulin resistance in the body. If you have diabetes and smoke, you're also at a higher risk for other complications, such as kidney problems, eye problems, and heart attack.

blood clotting

Smoking can increase clotting throughout your body. Blood clots increase the risk of heart damage, stroke, and pulmonary embolism (a blood clot in the lungs).

early menopause

Female smokers tend to enter menopause earlier than nonsmokers. Smoking has also been shown to increase hot flashes.

poor vision

Smoking can cause future vision problems and increase the risk of eye problems like glaucoma, macular degeneration, and cataracts.

dull sense of smell and taste

Your sense of smell and taste can be dulled by smoking, which can decrease your appetite.

lung cancer

Smoking puts you at a significantly higher risk of developing lung cancer. Lung cancer is the most common cause of death due to smoking, according to the CDC. It's also the most common cause of cancer death in both men and women.

constricted blood vessels

Nicotine causes blood vessels to tighten and restrict blood flow, which increases your risk for high blood pressure, stroke, and heart attack.

COPD

Developing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is more common in smokers. In fact, 8 out of 10 cases of COPD are due to smoking. Your asthma symptoms can worsen as well.

loss of appetite

Smoking can suppress your appetite by decreasing your sense of taste. This can make eating less enjoyable. Once you stop smoking, you'll be more likely to taste your food fully again.

yellow fingers

Handling tobacco products can stain your fingers and fingernails, turning them yellow.

cervical cancer

The risk for developing cervical cancer is increased in women who smoke.

wrinkly skin

Substances in cigarettes can cause dry skin and premature aging. Reduced blood flow also causes your skin to get less nutrition.

problems with pregnancy and newborns

Smoking during pregnancy can increase the risk for miscarriage, asthma, ear infections, and death in your newborn. It also puts the baby at risk for oxygen deprivation, growth problems, physical deformities, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

cancer connection

Smoking-related cancers can occur anywhere in the body. People who smoke have a higher rate of certain cancers, including cancer of the mouth, throat, bladder, and kidneys.

increased risk of blood cancer

When compared with people who don't smoke, people who do smoke have an increased risk of blood cancer, such as leukemia.

No matter how you smoke it, tobacco is dangerous to your health. There are no safe substances in any tobacco products, from acetone and tar to nicotine and carbon monoxide. Cigarettes contain about 600 ingredients, many of which can also be found in cigars and hookahs. When these ingredients burn, they generate more than 7000 chemicals, according to the American Lung Association. Many of those chemicals are poisonous and at least 69 of them are linked to cancer. The substances you inhale don't just affect your lungs. They can affect your entire body. Smoking can lead to a variety of ongoing complications in the body, as well as long-term effects on your body systems. While smoking can increase your risk of a variety of problems over several years, some of the bodily effects are immediate. The good news is that quitting smoking can reverse many effects.



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
HEART FOUNDATION



Health Effects on the Body from **SMOKING**

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM

One of the ingredients in tobacco is a mood-altering drug called nicotine. Nicotine reaches your brain in mere seconds and makes you feel more energized for a while. But as that effect wears off, you feel tired and crave more. Nicotine is extremely habit forming, which is why people find smoking so difficult to quit. Physical withdrawal from nicotine can impair your cognitive functioning and make you feel anxious, irritated, and depressed. Withdrawal can also cause headaches and sleep problems.

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

When you inhale smoke, you're taking in substances that can damage your lungs. Over time, this damage leads to a variety of problems. Along with increased infections, people who smoke are at higher risk for chronic nonreversible lung conditions such as: Emphysema (the destruction of the air sacs in your lungs), Chronic bronchitis (permanent inflammation that affects the lining of the breathing tubes of the lungs), Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD: a group of lung diseases) & Lung cancer. Withdrawal from tobacco products can cause temporary congestion and respiratory discomfort as your lungs and airways begin to heal. Increased mucus production right after quitting smoking is a positive sign that your respiratory system is recovering. Children whose parents smoke are more prone to coughing, wheezing, and asthma attacks than children whose parents don't. They also tend to have higher rates of pneumonia and bronchitis.

DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

Smoking increases the risk of mouth, throat, larynx, and esophagus cancer. Smokers also have higher rates of pancreatic cancer. Even people who "smoke but don't inhale" face an increased risk of mouth cancer. Smoking also has an effect on insulin, making it more likely that you'll develop insulin resistance. That puts you at increased risk of type 2 diabetes and its complications, which tend to develop at a faster rate than in people who don't smoke.





Health Effects on the Body from **SMOKING**

CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM

Smoking damages your entire cardiovascular system. Nicotine causes blood vessels to tighten, which restricts the flow of blood. Over time, the ongoing narrowing, along with damage to the blood vessels, can cause peripheral artery disease. Smoking also raises blood pressure, weakens blood vessel walls, and increases blood clots. Together, this raises your risk of stroke. You're also at an increased risk of worsening heart disease if you've already had heart bypass surgery, a heart attack, or a stent placed in a blood vessel. Smoking not only impacts your cardiovascular health, but also the health of those around you who don't smoke. Exposure to secondhand smoke carries the same risk to a nonsmoker as someone who does smoke. Risks include stroke, heart attack, and heart disease.

INTEGUMENTARY SYSTEM (SKIN, HAIR, NAILS)

The more obvious signs of smoking involve skin changes. Substances in tobacco smoke actually change the structure of your skin. A recent study has shown that smoking dramatically increases the risk of squamous cell carcinoma (skin cancer). Your fingernails and toenails aren't immune from the effects of smoking. Smoking increases the likelihood of fungal nail infections. Hair is also affected by nicotine. An older study found it increases hair loss, balding, and graying.



SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

Nicotine affects blood flow to the genital areas of both men and women. For men, this can decrease sexual performance. For women, this can result in sexual dissatisfaction by decreasing lubrication and the ability to reach orgasm. Smoking may also lower sex hormone levels in both men and women. This can possibly lead to decreased sexual desire.





Heart Disease and SMOKING

SMOKING AND CHOLESTEROL

Your lungs can absorb vapors released in cigarette smoke. These substances have been shown to: lower HDL (good cholesterol) levels, increase LDL (bad cholesterol) levels, make blood thicker, stickier, and more likely to clot; damage the cells that line blood vessels and arteries; & cause thickening and narrowing of blood vessels. Additionally, research has found that a compound called acrolein, which is found in cigarette smoke, goes a step further to impact your body's cholesterol levels. This highly reactive compound prevents the HDL in your blood from transporting the LDL out of your arteries and to your liver. This means that smoking not only increases LDL accumulation, but it also impairs the ability of HDL cholesterol to reverse the damage caused by LDL.

SMOKING AND HEART ATTACK RISK

The impact smoking has on your body doesn't stop with high cholesterol levels. Smoking can increase your risk for heart attack and stroke. Smoking can raise your LDL cholesterol levels and lower your HDL cholesterol levels. Over time, this can lead to inflammation in your blood vessels and arteries, and plaque can build up in your arteries. This plaque can harden and break off, which can lead to blood clots and strokes. When you have plaque in your arteries, your heart has a harder time pumping blood through your body. That makes your heart work harder and decreases blood flow to all areas of your body. These circumstances can result in a condition called coronary heart disease, or coronary artery disease. Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death worldwide. Smoking and high cholesterol are not the only risk factors for heart disease. Other risk factors include: family history, obesity, age & diet. However, smoking is one of the risk factors that you can control. In turn, quitting smoking can help improve cholesterol levels and lower your risk for heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.





Reversing Heart Damage by Quitting SMOKING

SMOKING AND REVERSING HEART DAMAGE

Yes, quitting smoking can reverse heart damage. In fact, it can do so quickly. According to the American Heart Association, one-third of deaths from coronary heart disease each year are due to smoking and secondhand smoke. On average, people who smoke die more than 10 years earlier than people who don't smoke. But quitting can positively impact your health within a short time frame. With time, you can nearly eliminate the damage that smoking caused to your blood vessels and heart: After 1 year of being smoke-free, your risk of heart disease and heart attacks will be halved. After 15 years, your risk for heart disease and heart attacks will be similar to someone who has never smoked. One study found that levels of HDL in former smokers return to levels equal to that of nonsmokers within 1 year of quitting.

Quitting smoking has other health benefits beyond the good it does for your cholesterol and heart health. For example, the nerve endings in your nose and mouth begin to grow back within 48 hours of your last cigarette. This will help restore your sense of smell and taste, which is damaged by smoking. You'll have more oxygen in your blood, which will translate to more energy for your cells and tissues to use. The improved oxygen levels can also help boost immunity and lower inflammation, so you're better able to fight off colds, viruses, and other illnesses. Quitting smoking lowers your risk of several cancers, too, including: Lung cancer, Brain cancer, Bladder cancer & Throat cancer.

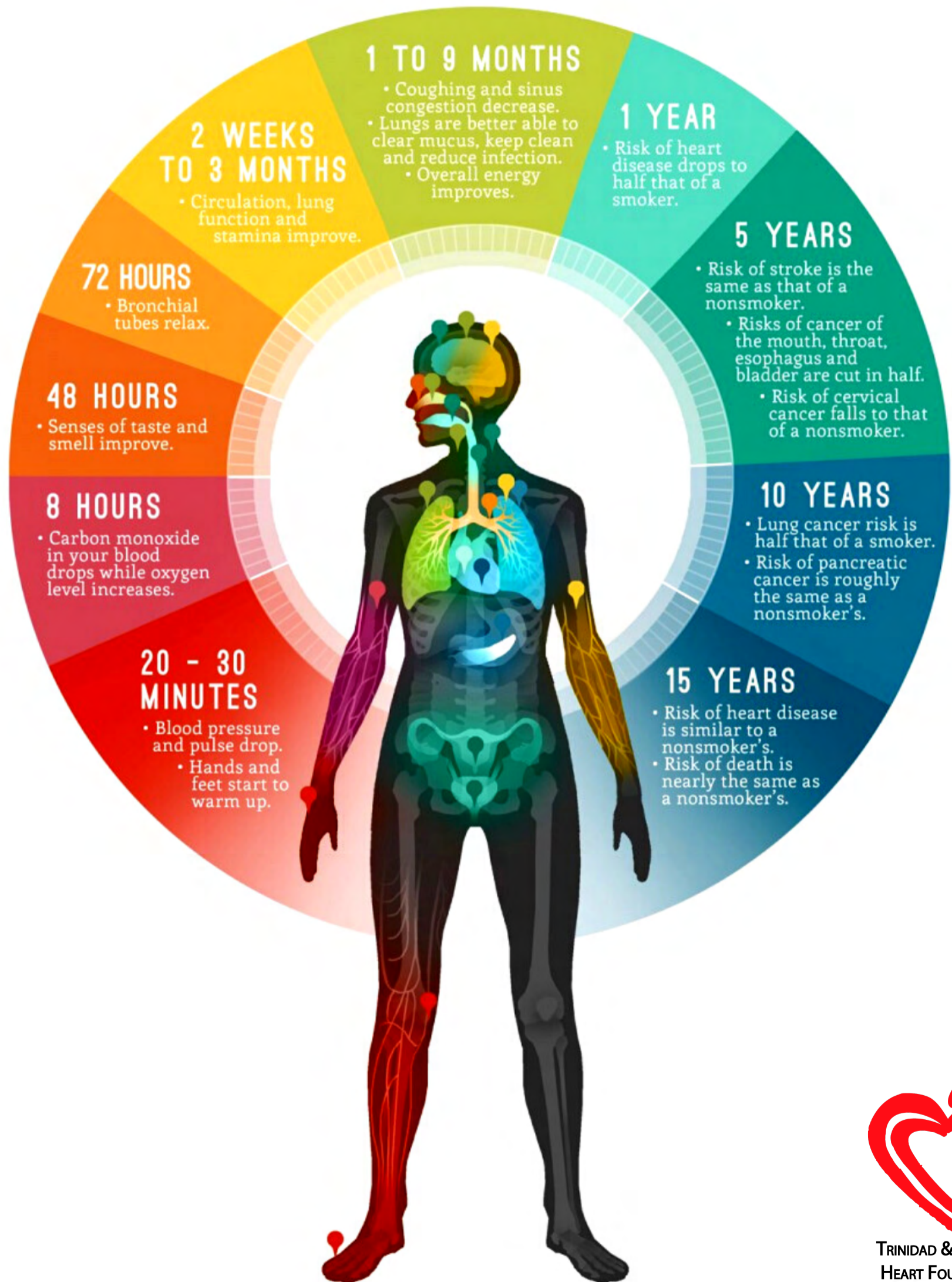
QUIT SMOKING BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
HEART FOUNDATION



What Happens When You Quit SMOKING





Steps You Can Take to Quit SMOKING

QUITTING COLD TURKEY

Quitting cigarette smoking can be difficult no matter how you do it, but the idea of quitting cold turkey can seem especially daunting. It may not be the right choice for everyone, but given the damage smoking has on the body, getting it over and done with does have its appeal. Smoking significantly increases your risk for disease, including several cancers. There are many nicotine products available to help you wean off nicotine, but the cold turkey method means cutting all nicotine full stop. Your body will begin to reap the health benefits of quitting smoking within 20 minutes of your last cigarette. Withdrawal symptoms can make it feel otherwise, though. Many people feel like they have the flu when quitting smoking. Nicotine is highly addictive. Research suggests it may be as addictive as cocaine, heroin, and alcohol. The good news is that withdrawal symptoms are temporary. The worst symptoms usually improve in a few days to a couple of weeks. Withdrawal symptoms and their severity can differ from person to person and change from day to day. As uncomfortable as they can be, nicotine withdrawal typically isn't dangerous for your health. Remember that symptoms are only temporary and the longer you go without nicotine, the easier it will get. Some common nicotine withdrawal symptoms include:

Intense cravings for cigarettes

Irritability

Feeling down

Restlessness

Difficulty sleeping

Trouble concentrating

Increased appetite

Cough or sore throat

Changes in bowel habits

Nausea



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
HEART FOUNDATION



Steps You Can Take to Quit SMOKING

STRATEGIES FOR QUITTING COLD TURKEY

If you're determined to quit smoking cold turkey, be ready to deal with cravings and withdrawal symptoms. You may also try to avoid some things that tend to make you want to smoke, or have a plan in place for when you encounter them. Here are some tips to help you quit.

Prepare for withdrawal: You're going to have cravings. You're probably going to feel lousy at least for a few days, too. This is totally normal. You can help make the withdrawal phase easier by being prepared.

To help this phase pass as smoothly as possible you can:

1. Schedule workout classes or other activities to keep your mind off your cravings.
2. Have healthy snacks on hand. Consider foods that keep your mouth busy, like carrots, pretzels, and apples.
3. Buy a new book or choose a new show to binge-watch — anything to keep you engaged during downtime.
4. Have cough lozenges and over-the-counter medication on hand for nausea, cough, and other flu-like symptoms you may experience.
5. Make plans with friends and family. The more support the better.
6. Replace smoking with another habit or simple activity.





Steps You Can Take to Quit SMOKING

STRATEGIES FOR QUITTING COLD TURKEY

Know your smoking triggers and habits: Identifying your triggers is another important step that can prepare you for successful cessation. Triggers are things that make you want to smoke. They generally fall into one of four categories: Pattern, Emotional, Social, Withdrawal.

Pattern triggers

A pattern trigger is an activity you associate with smoking. Some common ones include: drinking alcohol or coffee, watching TV, talking on the phone, after sex, work breaks, finishing a meal, driving. If you're used to having a cigarette during any of these activities, you need to break the association between the two. Instead of smoking, you can replace a cigarette with chewing gum or hard candy; keep your hand busy by squeezing a stress ball or writing in a journal; change your routine; have coffee at a different time, or brush your teeth right after you eat.

Emotional triggers

Intense emotions commonly trigger the desire to smoke. You may be accustomed to smoking when you're feeling stressed as an escape for negative feelings. For some people, smoking is an enhancement of a good mood when they're feeling excited or happy. Feelings that may trigger a craving include: stress, anxiety, sadness, boredom, loneliness, excitement, happiness and/or anger. The key to overcoming emotional triggers is finding healthier ways to cope with your feelings. Instead of smoking, you can talk to someone about what's bothering you, or share your excitement with a friend or loved one. You can talk to a professional, such as a therapist. You may try to get some exercise to relieve stress and anxiety, and improve your mood. You can try relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, yoga, or listening to calming music.





Steps You Can Take to Quit SMOKING

STRATEGIES FOR QUITTING COLD TURKEY

Social triggers

Social triggers are social occasions that usually include other smokers, such as parties and social gatherings; bars and nightclubs, concerts, being around other people who smoke. The best way to deal with social triggers is to avoid them for a while. Avoid being around other people who smoke, too. This can be very difficult if you have close friends and family who smoke. Let them know you have to quit. Ask them not to smoke around you while you're trying to quit. Eventually, being around people who are smoking will get easier.

Withdrawal triggers

The longer you've smoked, the more used to getting nicotine on a regular basis your body will be. This will affect the frequency and severity of your withdrawal symptoms. Common withdrawal triggers include smelling cigarette smoke, craving the taste or feeling of cigarettes, handling cigarettes, lighters, and matches; feeling like you need something to do with your hands; or other withdrawal symptoms. The best way to deal with withdrawal triggers is to distract yourself from the cravings. Begin by throwing away your cigarettes and anything related to smoking, like ashtrays. As soon as you feel the urge to smoke, find something to do or someone to talk to. If your withdrawal is triggering cravings that are overwhelming and you feel you need extra help, speak to your doctor about your options.





Helping Others to Quit SMOKING

If your partner, friend or family member is trying to quit smoking, there are many things you can do to help. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that around 70 percent of adult smokers say they want to quit. However, a much smaller percentage of smokers are successful. It can take more than one quit attempt to finally quit. Having support can help people stop smoking.

You play a greater role in your person's ability to quit than you might realize. Consider these ways you can help your person quit.

1. Express your concerns without lecturing

Many smokers already know the health

risks of smoking. Still, the increased risks of lung cancer and heart disease may not be strong enough deterrents. The American Heart Association says that nicotine may be at least as addictive as cocaine and heroin. However, some smokers don't realize the emotional and physical damage their habit has on loved ones. Secondhand smoke is hazardous. Cigarettes can also be expensive. You can put the effects of your person's smoking into perspective by doing the following:

1. Provide a cost analysis. Then show them what your family could have with the money that's spent on cigarettes over time, such as a vacation, new furniture, or a better car.
2. Discuss how this habit isolates them and even you from social situations that don't allow smoking.
3. Express that you want to live a long life with them in it, and you're concerned that their smoking won't make that possible.





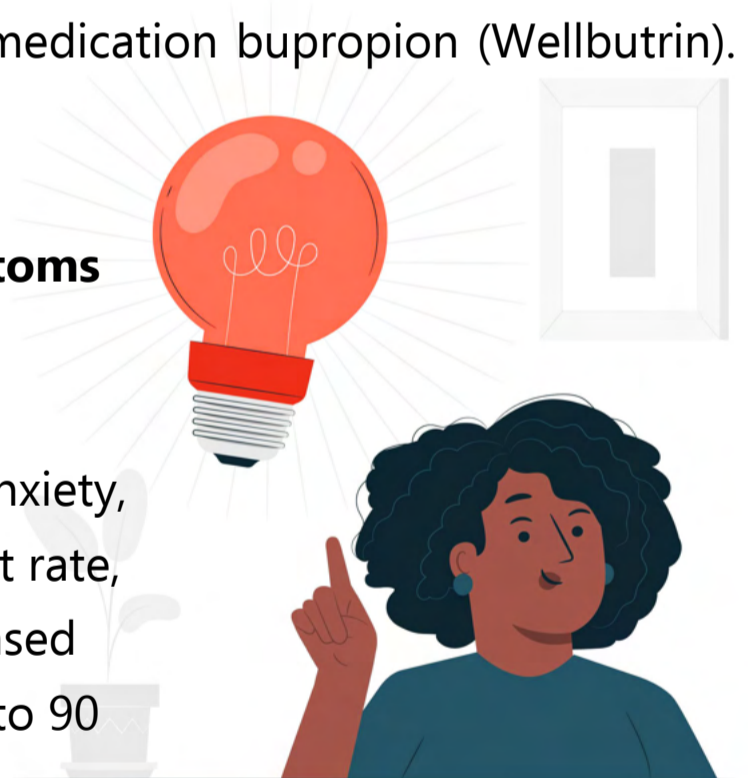
Helping Others to Quit SMOKING

2. Help them find an aid

Many people who want to quit smoking turn to nicotine replacement products. They come in many forms, including: patches, gums, lozenges, nasal sprays, & inhalers. These have their pros and cons. They're often costly, although these aids often end up being less expensive than cigarettes, especially if a heavy smoker is using them. They don't always work, though, which can be discouraging for smokers. Relapses can happen. Prescription medication is also available. It works by altering brain chemicals rather than offering nicotine replacement. The American Thoracic Society (ATS) strongly recommends that all people who are quitting smoking and are dependent on tobacco start with the medication varenicline (Chantix). The ATS recommends varenicline over nicotine patches and the prescription medication bupropion (Wellbutrin). Treatment should last for at least 12 weeks.

3. Be patient as they manage withdrawal symptoms

Perhaps one of the reasons why many smokers refrain from quitting is that they're afraid of the withdrawal symptoms. These can include: anger, anxiety, difficulty, concentrating, irritability, a reduced heart rate, restlessness, difficulty sleeping, weight gain, increased appetite. According to Smokefree.gov, around 80 to 90 percent of smokers have a physical addiction to nicotine. Withdrawal symptoms can be stronger than the cravings for cigarettes. This means that your person might still be going through physical withdrawal despite no longer emotionally craving nicotine. Knowing this ahead of time can prepare you to expect withdrawal symptoms. It's important to be patient during the period of withdrawal.





Helping Others to Quit SMOKING

4. Come up with distractions

Distractions can go a long way in reducing cravings and treating withdrawal symptoms. If your person needs a distraction from smoking, offer to do one of the following with them: play a game, take a walk, watch a movie, cook a new meal, take a class that involves handwork, such as painting, work in the yard. Find something your person enjoys that can distract them from the cravings. However, try to avoid going to places where there may be other smokers, such as concerts and bars. You can also offer tips for your person to try out when you're not around, such as: chewing gum, drinking herbal tea, playing a smartphone game, using a toothpick, eating hard foods, such as apples, carrots, or pretzels, drinking a glass of water, meditating for 5 to 10 minutes practicing yoga.

5. Find the right level of encouragement

It's important not to let any excitement you may be feeling set up unrealistic expectations. If your partner thinks you're beginning to badger them, they may stop listening to you completely. It's important to approach the discussion in a measured way and know when you've said all you should for that day. Give your partner things to think about, and then let them come to you to talk about it when the time is right. However, encouragement is important. Helping your partner is crucial to their success. After a while, they might lose momentum because there's nothing to look forward to. Help them create rewards, such as: a date night, going away for the weekend, a shopping trip, gift cards, an encouraging handwritten note, flowers, compliments.



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
HEART FOUNDATION



Helping Others to Quit SMOKING

6. Know when to seek outside help

While you can offer your person a great deal of help, it's also important to know when to seek outside resources. If your person is having a particularly difficult time and is having severe withdrawal symptoms, consider helping them find behavioral therapy. Group therapy can also be helpful. It has the added benefit of offering social support from fellow smokers who want to quit. It can help reduce any strain on your relationship too. There are apps and phone numbers to call for help as well. Both Android and Apple offer free apps to track success. These might be especially helpful if your person is a visual learner.

7. Be supportive through the hard times

Perhaps the most important way you can help your person quit smoking is to be supportive, especially on hard days. Nicotine is a drug. A nicotine addiction can be emotionally and physically painful, especially as your person encounters withdrawals and cravings. Most smokers who try to quit aren't successful on the first try. Quitting can require multiple attempts. Your understanding and continued support will make it more likely that your partner will keep trying and ultimately succeed.

