

Quitting Tobacco Checklist

Congratulations on your decision to quit using tobacco. Use the following checklist to help chart your progress and help keep you encouraged. If you have any concerns or questions, talk with your health care provider.

Getting Ready to Quit (4 to 7 Days Before Your Actual Quit Date)

- Choose a date to stop using tobacco.
Date _____
- Write down the top three reasons you are quitting (such as “to save money,” “to have better health” or “to improve the health of my family.”) Keep this list in important places so you have a constant reminder. Look at your list whenever you feel an urge to use tobacco or if you need encouragement.
- Smoke fewer cigarettes or cigars or use less chewing tobacco. Try not to use tobacco during your high-risk or stressful situations. If you find it helpful, make a list of the situations in which you usually use tobacco.
- Make using tobacco more difficult. Use matches, not a lighter. Keep your tobacco products in a different place so they are not handy. Change your routine. (If you usually smoke after a meal, go for a walk or do something different.)
- Talk with your health care provider about quitting tobacco products. There are several prescription and over-the-counter products you can try. If you find something that works well, keep a supply of it so you don't run out.

Quitting (The First 2 Weeks)

- Remove all tobacco products from your home, car and workplace. Make your home smoke-free and ask that no one in your family smoke in your home.
- Stay busy. Find something to do if you are bored so you won't be tempted to use tobacco.
- Eat a healthful diet and drink lots of liquids.
- Get regular exercise. If you don't have an exercise routine, talk with your health care provider before starting one.
- You may feel withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, fatigue (feeling tired), insomnia (being unable to sleep) or not being able to concentrate. If you have withdrawal symptoms, do the following.
 - Remember that most cravings last fewer than 10 minutes, then go away whether you smoke or not.
 - Remind yourself why you are quitting. Read the list you made before you started quitting.
 - Review the fact sheet, “Tips and Coping Skills for Quitting Smoking,” and try the suggestions listed.
- Remember all of the benefits to quitting tobacco. You will save money, be healthier and make your home healthier for your family.



Quitting (After 2 Weeks)

- ❑ Be aware of the situations and people that make you want to use tobacco. If you are going to be in a situation that used to be linked to smoking (such as being in a bar or spending lunch breaks with co-workers who smoke), remind yourself why you have quit.
- ❑ If you feel you want to use tobacco, remember that the desire only lasts fewer than 10 minutes. If the desire is strong, either do something else or leave the situation.
- ❑ Congratulate yourself every time you successfully beat the urge for tobacco.
- ❑ Set aside the money you would have spent on tobacco products and use it for a reward.

Quitting (After 2 Months)

- ❑ The most common time for relapse is at 2 months. Remember: not only is there no safe tobacco, there is no safe way to smoke. Do not let yourself think you can have one or two cigarettes and quit again.
- ❑ Be more careful when stressful events (such as personal, financial or work problems) or unusual events (such as a funeral, wedding or vacation) occur.

- ❑ If you do slip and use tobacco, do not be too hard on yourself. Return to quitting right away. Write down what the situation was that led to the tobacco use and learn from the experience.
- ❑ If you see tobacco ads or see people smoking, remember why you quit. Read your list and think about how much healthier you are for having quit. By 2 months:
 - The carbon monoxide level in your blood dropped to normal and the oxygen level in your blood increased to normal.
 - Your chance of a heart attack has decreased.
 - Nerve endings started to grow again. Your senses of smell and taste has improved.
 - Circulation to your hands and feet improved, your ability to exercise has increased and your lung function increased up to 30 percent.
 - In addition, your cough, stuffy nose and shortness of breath are decreasing and your energy level is increasing.
- ❑ Think positively! Not using tobacco is totally in your control. No one else can make you use tobacco.