

# SMOKING CESSATION



## The Facts About Quitting

- 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.
- Only about 4% to 7% of people are able to quit smoking on any given attempt without medicines or other help.
- **Quitting and depression:** Depression and smoking go hand in hand. People who are depressed are more likely to smoke. And smoking has been shown to double your risk of anxiety and depression.
  - People with depression try to quit more often but are less successful. The good news here is that they're highly motivated to quit. If you suffer from depression, this means that it's even more important that you get support to quit and don't try it on your own.

## When smokers quit – what are the benefits over time?

- **20 minutes after quitting** your heart rate and blood pressure drop.
- **8 hours after quitting** the carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
- **2 weeks to 3 months after quitting** your circulation improves and your lung function increases.
- **1 to 9 months after quitting** coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) start to regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection.
- **1 year after quitting** the excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker's.
- **5 years after quitting** your risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder are cut in half. Cervical cancer risk falls to that of a non-smoker. Stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2-5 years.
- **10 years after quitting** the risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking. The risk of cancer of the larynx (voice box) and pancreas decreases.
- **15 years after quitting** the risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker's.

## How To Quit

- Deciding to quit is the first step. But you're much less likely to succeed doing it cold turkey. Each help tool you use, from medication to counseling to joining a quit plan, compounds your chances of succeeding.
- 25% of smokers who use medicines can stay smoke-free for over 6 months. Counseling and other types of emotional support can boost success rates higher than medicines alone.

## What about meds? What ones work?

For up to 6 weeks after smokers quit, their brain cells have more nicotine-binding receptors than nonsmokers' cells do. That's why people who quit continue to have strong cravings and it can be so difficult, and why medications and nicotine replacement therapy can be helpful to many to get them over that hump.

Options to consider:

- Over-the-counter nicotine - nicotine patch (also by prescription), gum, lozenge
- All of these options provide around the same dose of nicotine over the day. Choose the one that works best for your life.
- Evidence suggests that rates of successfully quitting smoking are almost doubled in persons using any form of nicotine replacement.
- Prescription nicotine - nicotine patch, inhaler, nasal spray
- Prescription nicotine replacement therapies are stronger and provide higher doses of nicotine
- Prescription non-nicotine meds -varenicline (brand name Chantix) or bupropion (brand name Zyban)

A review of all smoking cessation meds showed that:

- For every 10 people who quit with placebo about 18 could be expected to quit with Nicotine replacement therapy or with bupropion. Varenicline was even more effective. For every 10 who quit with placebo about 28 could be expected to quit with varenicline.
- Vaporizers - The science surrounding vaporizers is still in its early days. We don't know what long-term health effects they might have. Some studies have shown that they contain potentially carcinogenic ingredients. So if you don't use tobacco in any way, do not start using a vaporizer. But if you smoke, a vaporizer could be a useful tool on the road to quitting as a way to wean off of cigarettes.

