

TAKE ACTION NOW

Smoking and Heart Disease

How Does Smoking Affect My Heart?

If you smoke, you are more likely to get heart disease. Smokers also suffer more heart attacks and strokes than people who do not smoke. Even breathing in the smoke from other people smoking can harm you.

Why Is It so Hard to Quit?

The nicotine in cigarettes is quite addictive. For some smokers, trying to not smoke can be as hard as it is for drug addicts to stop using drugs such as heroin or cocaine. Most people try to quit several times before they quit for good. The time you spend trying to quit is helpful, even if you start to smoke again. This is because you learn more about quitting each time you try.

Where Can I Find More Help?

Your health care professional can help you make a plan to quit smoking. You also can go online to smokefree.gov. This Web site has ideas that can help you quit and stay smoke free. Or you can call 800-QUITNOW (800-784-8669). This is a help line from the American Cancer Society for people who want to stop smoking.



Talk to Your Health Care Professional About a Plan to Quit Smoking That is Right For You.

Using a medication can double your chance of quitting. Talk to your health care professional about over-the-counter and prescription medicines to help you decide which is best for you.

Call 800-QUITNOW for help from the American Cancer Society to stop smoking.

Provided as an educational resource by Merck



5 Steps to Help You Quit

You can get ready by following the steps listed below.

Step 1

- Set a quit date.
- Get rid of all cigarettes and ashtrays.
- Do not let others smoke in your home.

Step 2

- Ask for support and encouragement from family, friends, and coworkers.
- Ask them not to smoke around you.
- Ask your health care professional for advice.
- Join a support group in your area.

Step 3

- When you get the urge to smoke, do something else that you like to do. This also may reduce your level of stress.
- Keep yourself hydrated by drinking a lot of water and other fluids.
- Change your normal routine—do things differently such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator, eating your meals in another location, and driving a different route.

Step 4

- Ask your health care professional for advice about medication that could help you stop smoking.
- If your health care professional prescribes medicine, carefully read the information on the package and make sure you understand it. Talk with your health care professional or pharmacist if you have any questions.

Step 5

- Avoid other smokers.
- Avoid potential weight gain by following a healthy diet and exercise program. Check with your health care professional before starting an exercise program.

Talk to your health care professional about your plan to quit smoking. You can go online to smokefree.gov for ideas that can help you quit and keep you smoke free.

Plan to Quit Smoking

My quit date:

Why I want to stop smoking:

Steps I will take to stop smoking:

