

Quitting Smoking

Along with tobacco, there are over 600 chemicals added to cigars and cigarettes. When a cigar or cigarette is lit, the burning end produces over 4000 toxic substances including 43 that are known to cause cancer. Several of the chemicals that are added to tobacco products are listed as hazardous materials that are so toxic they are not allowed to be disposed of in landfills. Examples of chemicals added or produced by cigarettes and cigars include:

- Arsenic
- Acetic Acid
- Acetone
- Ammonia
- Benzene
- Cadmium
- Carbon Monoxide
- Formaldehyde
- Hydrazine
- Hydrogen Cyanide
- Naphthalene
- Nickel
- Phenol
- Plonium

These and other harmful factors related to smoking, such as the effects of second-hand smoke, are some of the obvious reasons to quit. If you have decided to quit smoking CONGRATULATIONS!!! Here are some tips for quitting and a list of some things you can look forward to in your quest to develop a smoke-free lifestyle.

For more information:

If you would like more information about smoking cessation treatments or quitting, call one of the following agencies.

American Cancer Society.....800-227-2345
www.cancer.org

American Lung Assoc.....510-638-5864
www.lungusa.org

California Smokers Helpline.....1-800-NO-BUTS
www.californiasmokershelpline.com

24-hr Nurse Advice Line (Med Call).....800-877-0027

Student Health & Wellness Center.....707-654-1170

Visit Our Website at.....www.csum.edu//Health/Index.asp

****Special Thanks to San Diego State University****

California Maritime Academy
Student Health & Wellness Center
200 Maritime Academy Drive
Vallejo, Ca 94590

Phone: 707-654-1170
Fax: 707-654-1171
E-mail: healthcenter@csum.edu



When you quit smoking



California Maritime Academy

A campus of the California State University



Health Watch Education Brochure

Quitting Smoking

Nicotine's effect on the body

When a cigarette smoker inhales, about 25% of the nicotine in the smoke reaches the brain within six seconds. That's more than twice as fast as mainlining heroin. A pack-a day smoker gets between 50,000 and 70,000 such nicotine jolts a year. No other drug-taking habit comes near that number of fixes.

Nicotine causes the heart to beat much faster. Blood vessels constrict, blood pressure rises, pulse rate increases, and free fatty acids pour into blood. These effects, combined with the stress caused by carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke, are thought to cause 120,000 excess heart attack deaths a year among U.S. smokers.

At first, the impact of nicotine sharpens thinking (both people and animals perform memory and learning tasks better after a jolt), but soon the user feels tired and let down; heart rate slows, blood pressure drops, the mind loses its keen edge.

Nicotine has other contradictory effects. Hitting the brain first, it galvanizes nerve connections and then blocks them; it evokes the discharge of adrenaline and similar catecholamines, and then stops the flow. It stimulates nerves in muscles, but this quickly gives way to a kind of paralysis. In small doses, nicotine causes tremors; in large doses, convulsions. Small doses also stimulate breathing; while large ones have the opposite effect.

Nicotine excites the vomiting reflex both in the brain and in the nerves of the stomach. Although it initially stimulates the intestines (explaining why so many smokers depend on the first smoke of the day for bowel regularity), later doses of nicotine slow down the entire digestive process. At first nicotine increases the flow of saliva in the mouth and in the bronchial tubes, but its effects are reversed with later doses.

Tips for Quitting

The first thing to remember is that quitting is not easy and requires some work on your part. Don't expect overnight miracles. Set realistic goals to quit and have realistic expectations for accomplishing those goals.

- Before you actually quit, practice going long periods without smoking.
- If you normally practice smoking with another specific behavior, change the other behavior or substitute the smoking. For example, if you usually smoke after meals, substitute smoking with exercise or drinking tea instead.
- Nibble on low calorie items such as apples, carrots and celery or chew gum.
- Keep your hands busy. Hold items such as pencils and pens in place of cigarettes and cigars.
- Drink lots of water or juice in place of smoking (but avoid coffee and sodas that contain caffeine).
- When you feel the urge to smoke take deep breaths and exhale slowly.
- Move ashtrays to locations in your home that will make smoking an inconvenience.
- Seek support from family and friends.

Are there negative effects when you quit smoking?

Smokers sometime experience short-term adverse effects related to nicotine withdrawals. These effects include:

- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Frustration
- Anger
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Dizziness
- Increased appetite
- Excessive coughing
- Tightness in chest
- Difficulty concentrating
- Strong urges to smoke

Most of these problems subside within one to two weeks. Increased appetite and urges to smoke usually last a little longer. It is important to understand that withdrawal symptoms are only temporary and will eventually go away.

Tips for coping with withdrawal symptoms

Nicotine withdrawal symptoms are often triggered by stress. There are several ways to deal with this stress and fight the urge to smoke again. When faced with stressful situations that may lead to smoking, remember to use the one or all of Four D's to combat urges.

- Deep breathing

- Delaying smoking
- Distracting from smoking
- Drink fluids

Deep breathing is an effective alternative method to smoking for coping with stress. It is also an effective means of dealing with any tension or stress related to giving up cigarettes. Try this simple breathing exercise a few times a day while standing, sitting or lying down whenever you are bothered by tension.

1. With your mouth closed and your shoulders relaxed, inhale as slowly and deeply as you can to the count of eight. As you do that, push your stomach out.
2. Hold that breath to the count of four.
3. Exhale slowly to the count of eight.
4. Repeat this inhale-hold-exhale cycle five times.

Delaying smoking is another effective technique for coping with stress. Urges to smoke generally last 5-10 minutes. If a person can delay smoking by keeping occupied during that period of time, generally the cravings will subside:

Distracting from smoking by practicing another behavior is also helpful in alleviating urges to smoke and coping with stress. Some coping behaviors are:

- Taking a warm shower or bath
- Do relaxation stretches
- Going for a brisk walk
- Talking to a friend or family member
- Using oral substitutes for smoking (i.e., eating sunflower seeds, cinnamon sticks, carrot sticks and etc. or chewing on a toothpick.)
- Keeping hands busy by playing with a pencil or pen
- Doodling

Above all it is important to always remember that quitting is not easy and requires some work. Just as it took time to develop the skills to smoke, it will take time to form new behavior skills to stop smoking once and for all. Don't give up if you have a set back. Relapses can occur and should not be considered grounds for abandoning cessation techniques. Continue to work on skills that will help you obtain a life free from tobacco use.