



Your Health Matters! By Angela Kwok - Pharmacist at Cunderdin Pharmacy

Smoking Cessation: The Why and The How...

The vast majority of smokers in Australia **want to quit**, and most make repeated attempts to do so. About 40% try to stop smoking at least once each year. However, long-term quitting is an elusive goal for many smokers. Only 1 in 25 smokers who tries to quit 'cold turkey' is successful. Most smokers keep failing to quit because they are addicted to nicotine. Smoking causes an estimated 20% of the nation's cancer disease burden each year. 2 out of 3 deaths in long-term smokers are attributed to smoking.

What are the reasons people continue to smoke?

Over the years, smoking becomes part of your daily life. You learn to associate smoking with certain activities. Exposure to the trigger creates a strong urge to smoke. Also, nicotine can make smokers feel more alert, temporarily relieve anxiety or depression, reduce hunger and may help to control body weight. Some people smoke partly for these effects. Some people feel that smoking gives them comfort and company and is their 'best friend' and experience a powerful sense of loss or grief when they quit.

The benefits of quitting

Quitting is the most important thing you will ever do for your health. Tobacco smoke contains more than 7000 chemicals, over 70 of which are known to cause cancer. Quit Smoking give you immediate and long-term benefit: You will breathe better, your skin is better, have more energy and feel more relaxed.

Medical Conditions	Benefit In Smoking Cessation
Cardiovascular Disease	Cigarette smoking doubles the risk of developing coronary heart disease. After 3 years of quitting, your risk of having a heart attack is reduced by 50%
Pulmonary Disease	Smoking increases long-term risk of developing lung disease such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, chronic cough and sputum. Asthma and sudden infant death syndrome are more common in children exposed to cigarette smoke.
Cancer	Smoking cigarettes are responsible for 90% of lung cancer – the risk is reduced by half after 10 years of quitting smoking
Peptic Ulcer	Smoking increases risk of peptic ulcer disease (PUD). Healing rate of PUD increases after patients have quit smoking
Osteoporosis	Smoking increases risk of hip fractures in women. Stopping smoking after 10 years starts to reverse this risk.

PREPARING TO QUIT: Once you have decided to quit smoking, the first step is usually to set a Quit Date! This is the day when you will completely quit smoking

Other steps that may help in preparing to quit include the following:

- Tell family, friends, and co-workers about the plan to quit and ask for their support.
- Review other quit attempts. What worked? What did not work? What contributed to relapse?
- Prepare to deal with nicotine withdrawal symptoms, including anxiety, frustration, depression, and intense cravings to smoke. Recalling previous quit attempts may help anticipate these symptoms. Withdrawal symptoms usually become manageable within a few weeks of stopping completely.
- Prepare to deal with things that trigger smoking. Examples include having smokers in the household or workplace, stressful situations, and drinking alcohol. A vacation from work may be an easier time to quit, particularly if you smoke during work breaks.
- Talk with a healthcare provider about ways to quit smoking. Changing behaviours and taking a medication are the two main methods of quitting smoking. You are more likely to quit if you use both methods together

Remember: the most effective way to quit is:

Coaching + Nicotine Replacement Product OR Quitting Medication

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)	Nicotine Patch (Use Step 1 if smoke > 20/day, Step 2 if smoke <20 per day)	Nicotine Gum (Use 2mg if smoke < 20/day Use 4mg if smoke > 20/ day)	Nicotine Lozenges (Use 1.5 or 2mg if smoke < 20/day. Use 4mg if smoke > 20 /day)	Nicotine Oral Spray (Nicorette QuickMist)
Indication	To quit smoking (other 3 type of products are also used for cutting down number of cigarette usage)	Use these products if your have your 1st cigarette within 30 minutes of waking up, smoke > 10 cigarettes per day and/or suffer withdrawal symptoms: e.g. craving, irritability, anxiety, restlessness, poor concentration within 24 hours of quit smoking. All 3 products can be used as combination with Nicotine Patch (2mg Gum ,1.5mg, 2mg Lozenges or Nicotine Oral Spray)		
How does it work	Provide constant level of nicotine	Replace some of the nicotine you usually get from smoking cigarettes. It can reduce but not necessarily stop all withdrawal symptoms		
How to use		Chew 1-2 pieces when you have urge to smoke every 1-2 hours, maximum 12 pieces per day. Chew gum slowly until taste becomes strong then rest it between gum and the cheek. Chew again when taste has faded. Repeat until no more tingling.	Use 1-2 lozenges every 1-2 hours when there is an urge to smoke. Decrease to every 2-4 hours after 6 weeks. Do not use more than 15 per day. Lozenges slowly dissolve to release nicotine into saliva. From time to time, move lozenges from one side to another.	Spray under the tongue or side of cheek. Use 1-2 sprays when you have craving to smoke every 30 minutes to 1 hour. Do not exceed 4 sprays per hour or 64 sprays / day in a 16 hour period. Start to reduce dosage after 6 weeks.

Coping with recovery symptoms...

The first few days of quitting can be the hardest, as you may feel tired, irritable and tense. **After about one to two weeks most of these symptoms will disappear.**

To cope with cravings try the four Ds:

- ✓ **Delay** acting on the urge to smoke. After five minutes, the urge to smoke weakens.
- ✓ **Deep** breathe in and out slowly and deeply, and repeat three times.
- ✓ **Drink** water, sipping slowly, holding it in the mouth a little longer to savour the taste.
- ✓ **Do** something else. Listen to music, exercise or talk to a friend. After quitting smoking, being more active is the best thing you can do for your general health and wellbeing.

How to Deal with Relapse? *For more information about Quit smoking, talk to your **doctor or pharmacist***

- **Most smokers make many attempts to quit before they are able to quit completely. Smoking is a "relapsing" condition, and relapse should not be thought of as failures.**
- Each quit should be regarded a victory, and the longer it lasts, the better. However, if relapse occurs, it is important to understand **why** so that your next attempt will be more successful. Keep this in mind when attempting to quit for the first time.
- If you have success for a while, you can learn what helped and what did not and try again. **Try to figure out the reasons that led to start smoking again, and determine if you used the methods (medication, counselling) correctly.** Then explore solutions to use next time.
- Consider trying different methods or combinations of methods. Most relapses occur in the first week after quitting, when withdrawal symptoms are strongest. Try to mobilise support resources (e.g., family, friends) during this critical time.
- **Consider rewards for not smoking:** use the money saved on cigarettes for a special treat such as a massage, a movie, a new outfit, or a special dinner. Later relapses often occur during stressful situations or with social situations that are associated with smoking (e.g. alcohol). Being aware of these high-risk situations may help.

Useful website: <http://www.quitnow.gov.au/> <http://www.quit.org.au>



