

# FIVE KEYS TO QUITTING

Studies have shown that these five steps will help you quit and quit for good. You have the best chances of quitting if you use them together.

## GET READY

Set a quit date.

Make changes to your environment.

- Throw out **ALL** cigarettes and ashtrays in your home, car, and place of work.
- Ask visitors not to smoke around you.

Look at your past attempts to quit. Think about what worked and what did not.

## GET SUPPORT

Research shows that you have a better chance of being successful if you have help. You can get support in many ways:

- Tell your family, friends, and co-workers that you are going to quit. Ask them not to smoke around you.
- Talk to your health care provider (for example, doctor, dentist, nurse, pharmacist, psychologist, or smoking counselor).

Get individual, group, or telephone counseling. The more counseling you have, the better your chances are of quitting. Find a program at a local hospital or health center. Call your local health department for information about programs in your area.

## LEARN NEW SKILLS

- Try to distract yourself from urges to smoke. Talk to someone, go for a walk, or get busy with a task.
- When you first try to quit, change your routine. Take a different route to work. Drink tea instead of coffee. Eat breakfast in a different place.
- Write in a journal, exercise, or read a book.
- Plan to do something every day that makes you happy.
- Drink a lot of water.

## GET MEDICATION

- Medications can help you reduce some of your urges to smoke.
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved these medications to help you quit smoking: the patch, nicotine gum, nicotine lozenges (available over the counter) and a nicotine inhaler, nasal spray, Chantix and Zyban/Bupropion (all available by prescription)
- Ask your health care provider for advice and carefully read the information on the package to use medication properly.

- These medications, along with behavior change support can double your chances of quitting and quitting for good.
- Everyone who is trying to quit may benefit from using a medication. If you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant, nursing, under age 18, smoking fewer than 10 cigarettes per day, or have a medical condition, talk to your doctor or other health care provider before taking medications.

## BE PREPARED

Most relapses happen within the first three months after quitting. Don't be discouraged if you start smoking again. Remember, most people try to quit several times before they are successful. Here are some difficult situations to watch for:

- **Alcohol.** Avoid drinking alcohol. Drinking lowers your chances of success.
- **Other smokers.** Being around smoking can make you want to smoke.
- **Weight gain.** Many smokers will gain weight when they quit, usually less than 10 pounds. Eat a healthy diet and stay active. Don't let weight gain distract you from your main goal of quitting smoking. Some quit-smoking medications may help delay weight gain.
- **Bad mood or depression.** Find other ways to improve your mood besides smoking: talk to a friend, family member or counselor; start a new hobby; exercise or go for a walk outside.

If you are having problems with any of these situations, talk to your doctor or other health care provider.