

Tips to Quit Smoking in 2021

Quitting smoking is one of the popular New Year's resolutions, whether it be for better health, family, or something else.

But why is it so hard to quit? Nicotine in cigarettes causes addiction. It makes you feel uncomfortable and causes you to crave smoking when trying to cut it out of your system¹.

The key to quitting is solid preparation and support. Let's take a look at a few ways you can prepare yourself before trying to quit.

Motivations.

Think of motivations that can outweigh your urge to smoke. Think about what you dislike about smoking and the ways quitting can improve you and your loved ones' lives. Every time you want to pick up the cigarette again, remind yourself why you wanted to quit.

Triggers, Withdrawals, Cravings.

Smoking is a type of addiction, and you are likely to experience withdrawals. Before quitting, learn what to expect and how to deal with withdrawal symptoms. Possible symptoms include cravings, headaches, mood swings, and trouble sleeping or focusing². Getting plenty of water, rest, and exercise will help. Withdrawal symptoms aren't harmful to your body and will eventually go away. So hang in there!

Certain activities, items, situations, people, and emotions will trigger your craving². Write down all your triggers and decide in advance how you want to deal with them. Begin by deep cleaning your home and car to remove all items related to smoking, as well as the smell and residue of smoking from your clothes, carpets, furniture, etc. When you crave smoking, try staying busy – play games, enjoy a hobby, or exercise. Keep your mouth busy as well – brush your teeth, drink water, chew gum, or eat a light snack.

Never Give Up.

If you gave into smoking at your first attempt, don't be discouraged and keep trying! Quitting smoking can take multiple attempts before succeeding. It's important to learn from your mistakes. Keep a record of what caused you to smoke again and be aware of that situation during your next attempt. Remember to begin your next attempt within a few weeks.

Celebrate!

Successfully quitting smoking is a huge accomplishment, and you deserve to celebrate! Set timeline goals and reward yourself when you meet your goals!

1. "Nicotine Dependence." Mayo Clinic, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 14 Mar. 2020, www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/nicotine-dependence/symptoms-causes/syc-20351584.
2. "Managing Withdrawal." Smokefree.gov, smokefree.gov/challenges-when-quitting/withdrawal/managing-withdrawal.