

Stop smoking, take control!



Almost **3** out of **4** smokers
want to quit

Every year, thousands of smokers take action and the number of smokers is diminishing. In 2006, only 19% of Canadians smoked, in comparison to 35% in 1985. Living proof that even if it is difficult, you can break free from the tobacco habit.

More than ever, there are tools and resources available to help smokers live smoke free. It's worth a try!

By quitting smoking, you choose a better quality of life, diminish your risks of disease, increase your life expectancy and provide your loved ones with an improved environment. Healthwise, it's probably the best investment you can make.

If you want to quit smoking or are thinking of quitting in the months ahead, this leaflet is for you.

Are you ready to quit smoking?

To stop smoking, you have to be motivated. Here are few points to ponder and get a better idea of your degree of motivation:

- **Ask**
ex-smokers why and how they have stopped smoking.
- **Consult**
your physician or pharmacist to find out about cessation methods and pharmacological aids that are appropriate to your situation.
- **Discuss**
with your loved ones the advantages of a smoke-free life and the difficulties you foresee in getting there.
- **Get more information**
on the subject, by reading this leaflet or by browsing on Web sites such as www.quitchallenge.ca or www.heartandstroke.ca



Quitting smoking has many benefits



Make a list!

- Think of the **reasons** you want to quit smoking. Jot down those reasons and put them up on your fridge, in your office, etc. Great for motivation!
- Think of the **obstacles** that prevent you from taking action. Devise solutions to overcome them. For example, if you fear wanting a cigarette in the presence of other smokers, stay away from smoke-filled situations during the first weeks to avoid temptation. You can also ask smokers not to smoke in your presence. They will understand!

Discover the benefits

- Increase in quality of life: you are in better shape, have more energy and are no longer out of breath; you improve your sense of smell and taste, etc.
- Reduction of risks of disease and premature death.
- Protection of your family's health, of your surroundings and your pets, no longer exposed to cigarette smoke.
- Example for youth in your entourage.
- Protection of the planet: waste of trees and pollution due to the 5,700 billion non-biodegradable cigarette butts left in the environment every year and the release in the air of over 4,800 chemical substances, of which 60 are cancer causing.
- Savings
- Decrease of fire hazards
- Non-endorsement of an industry that robs you of your health, your freedom and your money.
- Feeling better because of whiter teeth, fresher breath, etc.
- Feeling at home in smoke-free environments, which are becoming more and more common.

Tobacco: an **attack** on your **health**

- 1 death out of every 6 in Canada is caused by tobacco.
- This represents 37,000 deaths each year, of which more than 800 are attributable to second-hand smoke.
- Smokers live, on average, 10 years less than non-smokers.

Heart disease

A smoker has a level of risk 1.5 to 3 times greater than a non-smoker of suffering from cardiovascular disease (CVD), such as a heart attack or a stroke leading to paralysis. CVD risks are even greater if that person has high blood pressure or elevated blood cholesterol. The moment you quit smoking, these risks start to diminish. After a year without smoking, they will have been reduced by half. It generally takes 15 years for these risk levels to return to those similar to non-smokers.

Cancer

About 30% of deaths from cancer are related to the use of tobacco. Close to 9 out of 10 cases of lung cancer are directly related to tobacco use. Cigarettes can also cause cancer of the mouth, throat, larynx, stomach, cervix, pancreas, oesophagus, kidneys, bladder, and a type of leukemia. Ten years after quitting smoking, the risk of lung cancer is reduced by 30 to 50%.

Other diseases

Many other diseases are related to tobacco such as bronchitis, pneumonia, emphysema, osteoporosis, ulcers, tooth loss, cataracts, etc.



The key to **success:** good **preparation**



Here are a few pointers:

- ☐ **Set the date when you want to quit.**
- ☐ **Know when and why you smoke.**
- ☐ **Get information on pharmacological aids.**
- ☐ **Get a help kit and some support.**
- ☐ **Learn from past attempts.**
- ☐ **Prevent weight gain.**
- ☐ **Slowly reduce your consumption of cigarettes.**
- ☐ **Enjoy the savings.**

Set the date when you want to quit.

Mark it down in your agenda, on a calendar or in your smoke-free diary.

Know when and why you smoke.

In the weeks leading up to your stop date, note the time, place, activity and people present every time you have a cigarette, as well as why you had a cigarette. This will allow you to identify your smoking habits and be in a better position to outsmart them.

Get information on pharmacological aids.

The use of a cessation method such as nicotine patches, gum or lozenges, as well as varenicline or bupropion tablets can really boost your chances of success. Consult with your pharmacist or physician to find out which treatment best suits your needs, as well as the products covered by your medical insurance plan. As for alternative methods, such as hypnosis or acupuncture, their efficiency has not been corroborated by medical studies.

Get a help kit and some support.

Put together different objects that will keep your hands and your mouth busy when you have the urge to smoke. A few examples: water bottle, sugarless gum, cinnamon stick, anti-stress ball. Identify friends you can call up in more difficult times.

Learn from past attempts.

If you have already tried to quit smoking, take note of the strategies that worked well for you and of the situations that caused you to start again. Benefit from your own experience.

Prevent weight gain.

Adopt winning habits right now: drink a lot of water; be active most days of the week; limit your servings; eat more fruit and vegetables and less fat and sugar. While this helps you control your weight, it will also relax you, give you more energy and lift your spirits.

Slowly reduce your consumption of cigarettes.

You will learn gradually to go without nicotine and will gain confidence in your capacity to live smoke free. But first, you must set a deadline.

Enjoy the savings.

You will find it very encouraging to see the money you spent on cigarettes accumulate and, with your savings, be able to reward yourself for your efforts.

Use the resources at hand

Take advantage of the Smokers' Helpline

The Smokers' Helpline is a free, confidential telephone service. Trained specialists can provide you with information, advice and support along with print resources and referrals to local programs and services in your community. Find your provincial Smokers' Helpline phone number by visiting www.cancer.ca or by calling **1 888 939-3333**.

Visit www.quitchallenge.ca

Day or night, the website provides information on quitting smoking and offers a very dynamic virtual community via its forum.

Visit other useful sites:

www.cancer.ca
www.heartandstroke.ca
www.healthcanada.gc.ca/tobacco

D Day and after

1 Go step by step.

Every cigarette you don't smoke is a small victory: be proud of yourself! Face the challenges one by one, day by day, without thinking further ahead. Avoid negative thoughts and stay confident.

2 Learn to live with withdrawal.

Withdrawal from nicotine can have undesirable effects that vary in intensity from one person to the next. These are headaches, irritability and insomnia. They usually disappear after a few weeks. Pharmacological treatment (nicotine patches, gum or lozenges, varenicline or bupropion tablets) help to control them. Consult with your physician or pharmacist on the subject.

3 Resist the urge to smoke.

Often very strong and regular at the beginning, the urge to smoke decreases with time and finally disappears. Usually, each one only lasts a few minutes. To resist the urge to smoke, try these proven remedies: drink water; chew on a cinnamon stick or a drinking straw; play with an anti-stress ball; take deep breaths through the nose; call a friend. You will certainly find a few tricks of your own.



4 Avoid situations that cause you to smoke.

Stress, coffee, alcohol, the presence of smokers? You know the moments and the situations you normally associate with cigarettes. Avoiding them for a while will help you to break the force of habit.

5 Enjoy the benefits of life without tobacco.

More energy, less breathlessness, increased self-confidence, more money. Take the time to appreciate the many advantages of life without tobacco.

6 Reward yourself.

Breaking free from tobacco is demanding. Take the time to relax each day. Reward yourself after a week, a month, a year smoke free. Now that's something worth celebrating!

No, thank you!

One stressful moment, a get-together with friends and after months without tobacco, the urge to take "just one" comes back?

Saying NO, even to "just one" cigarette, remains the best way to stay in control. Now is the time to play back the reasons that made you stop in the first place and to use your winning strategies.

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