



Tips to Quit Smoking

*University of
Pittsburgh
Medical Center
Information
for Patients*

Developing a master plan

It takes planning and commitment to quit smoking. One of the best ways to become smoke-free is to develop a **master plan** for quitting. In developing your master plan, you should do the following:

- Identify personal reasons to quit.
- Set a quit date.
- Remember to take it “one day at a time.”

Identifying triggers

It also is important to identify **triggers** that tend to make you want to smoke.

Once you know your triggers, you can either avoid them or change your behavior. The chart below lists several triggers and steps that you can take to avoid them.

Trigger	Behavior Change
Cigarettes, lighters, ashtrays, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get rid of smoking items.
Coffee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink something different. • Use a different mug. • Drink your coffee in a different place. • Choose a different brand or flavor.
Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave the table as soon as you finish eating. • Brush your teeth. • Sit in the non-smoking section of a restaurant.
Driving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a different route. • Change your radio station. • Listen to talk radio or books on tape. • Put something else in your mouth, like gum or a cinnamon stick. • Do deep breathing.

Eliminating cravings

Cravings are urges to smoke. Cravings can be intense at times. Important facts about cravings are listed below:

- They occur close together in the early days of quitting.
- Each craving is like a wave. It arrives, reaches a peak, and goes away even if you don't smoke.

- Cravings go away with time as long as you do not smoke. As time passes, you will have more time between cravings, and they will be shorter.
- Cravings increase after a slip or relapse.
- Respond to cravings with **cognitive** (thinking) and **behavioral** (doing) coping skills.

The chart below lists several examples of coping skills to quit smoking.

*University of
Pittsburgh
Medical Center

Information
for Patients*

Cognitive (thinking)	Behavioral (doing)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List personal reasons to quit and the benefits of quitting. • Repeat the phrase, “Smoking is not an option.” • Repeat the single word, “Stop.” • Remind yourself, “Don’t destroy the progress made to date.” • Remember how far you have come. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice the deep-breathing technique (see the UPMC patient education sheet titled “Deep Breathing”). • Use handling substitutes such as a soft squeeze ball. • Try substitutes such as sugarless chewing gum. • Start exercising. Check with your doctor before making any major changes in your exercise level. • Keep busy.

Helpful hints

Here are other suggestions to help you quit smoking:

- Involve someone else as a **support person**. You may want more than one support person. Talk over with each support person how you want him or her to help.
- Cigarettes keep your hands busy. So when you quit, your hands will miss having a cigarette to handle. Keep them busy with pens, pencils, rubber bands, or squeeze balls. Items like these are sometimes called “**handling substitutes**.” Doodling can be a creative handling substitute.
- Smoking also keeps your mouth busy. Use low-calorie or no-calorie items such as hard candy, sugarless gum, fresh fruits and vegetables, cinnamon sticks, or menthol cough drops. These items are sometimes called “**oral substitutes**.” Sugar-free candy and gum often contain sorbitol. Too much can cause diarrhea. It also may be helpful to brush teeth frequently, use breath spray, or drink plenty of water.
- Talk with your doctor about using a medicine such as nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) or Zyban.

Focus on the positive

Positive thinking is an essential part of any effort to quit smoking. Here are 3 ways to focus on the positive:

- Make a list of personal reasons to quit and keep adding to it as you think of more.
- Focus on the benefits of not smoking.
- Build an attitude that you are better off as a non-smoker than as a smoker.

If you want help to stop smoking:

- Classes may be available in your community. Call 800-553-UPMC (8762) to find out more.
- If you are an inpatient at a UPMC hospital:
 - Ask your nurse if the hospital has the UPMC patient education TV channel, which features a video about quitting smoking.
 - Ask to talk one-on-one with a smoking cessation counselor.
- Go to UPMC’s patient education website (<http://patienteducation.upmc.com>). Under the Smoking category is *Journey to a Smoke Free Life*, a 42-page guide that can help you devise a successful strategy to quit smoking, as well as other materials about the dangers of smoking and other health topics. You can print out any or all of these materials.
- Additional resources are available from the toll-free Pennsylvania Department of Health Quit Line. Call 1-877-724-1090.

TIPS TO QUIT SMOKING

*University of
Pittsburgh
Medical Center*

*Information
for Patients*



UPMC

University of Pittsburgh
Medical Center

Pittsburgh, PA, USA
www.upmc.com

© University of Pittsburgh Medical
Center 2003
SYS239670 EJD/MK ORIG 06/04
Form # 7254-82190-0604

For help in finding a doctor or health service that suits your needs, call the UPMC Referral Service at 412-647-UPMC (8762) or 800-533-UPMC (8762).

The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center is an equal opportunity employer. Policy prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status. Further, UPMC will continue to support and promote equal employment opportunity, human dignity, and racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in UPMC programs and activities. This commitment is made by UPMC in accordance with federal, state, and/or local laws and regulations.

This information is not intended to be used as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. You should not rely entirely on this information for your health care needs. Ask your own doctor or health care provider any specific medical questions that you have.