

Quitting Tobacco

CARING FOR YOUR HEART AND VASCULAR HEALTH

Whether you've been using tobacco for two years or 20 years, it's never easy to quit. Many tobacco users make several attempts to quit before kicking the habit for good. The important thing to remember is that it's never too late to quit! No matter how much or how long you have used tobacco, your health can improve. By quitting, you will reduce your risk of increased heart problems, cancer and other illnesses. You will have more energy, too.

Quitting

Accomplishing your goal to quit and stay tobacco-free can be hard. Here are some tips to help you become permanently tobacco-free.

Know your triggers

Knowing what situations trigger you to use tobacco can help you avoid these situations while you are quitting and help you stay tobacco-free. Look where and when you use it and come up with alternatives. For example, if you use tobacco in the morning before work, try watching the morning news, reading the paper



or doing a crossword puzzle. If you use "dip" or "chew" after a meal, try taking a walk or calling a friend.

Coping with withdrawal symptoms

Chances are you will experience withdrawal symptoms for a few weeks. These may include: craving for nicotine, difficulty concentrating, tingling in your arms or legs, hunger, coughing and upset stomach. Though they will decrease over time, you can minimize these symptoms and curb the urge to use tobacco by using a nicotine replacement therapy (patch, gum,

inhaler, lozenge, spray) and/or other medications such as Varenicline (also known as Chantix™) and Bupropion (also known as Zyban® or Wellbutrin®). You should talk to your doctor before beginning replacement therapy.

STAY TOBACCO-FREE

Researchers have found combining medications with cessation counseling helps people quit long term.

Reward yourself for success

Making a healthy lifestyle change is cause for celebration. Reward yourself for meeting regular goals such as the first day, week and month that you have stayed tobacco-free. These can be small treats such as buying new clothes or going to a special dinner or sports event.

Exercise

Many people say that they use tobacco a lot when they are bored and have little to do. One of the best strategies to help you quit and stay tobacco-free is to increase your daily physical activity. You don't have to become an athlete or join a gym. Activities such as walking, gardening or cleaning your house are all great exercises. It's also a great way to relax and stay in shape.

Get support

Help is available. Tackling tobacco is a great challenge. But you don't have to do it alone. There are resources available to help you stop using tobacco for good. These programs will give you the support you need to stick with your goal, manage stress, gain confidence and prevent relapse.

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STAY TOBACCO-FREE

Using tobacco greatly increases your risk for a heart event. After your surgery, don't start using tobacco again. Stay tobacco-free.

Quitting Tobacco

Individual cessation programs

Delaware Quitline (FREE)

Tobacco specialists provide one-on-one face to face counseling or telephone counseling for Delaware residents age 18 or older. The program also provides vouchers to help eligible residents receive nicotine replacement therapy, or other medications such as Varenicline (also known as Chantix™) and Bupropion (also known as Zyban® or Wellbutrin®). Call 866-409-1858 toll-free to participate. For residents outside of Delaware, call the National Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

For additional information about free face-to-face counseling at Christiana Care, call 302-623-4661. To register for counseling, call 800-260-3073.

Online programs and resources

American Lung Association Freedom from Smoking®

Online Program www.ffsonline.org

National Cancer Institute www.smokefree.gov

QuitNet www.quitnet.org

American Cancer Society www.cancer.org

Quitline www.quitsupport.com

Group cessation programs

American Lung Association Freedom from Smoking®

The program consists of eight group sessions and includes lectures, group discussions and skills practice. Contact the Delaware chapter of the American Lung Association at 302-737-6414 ext. 516. Call for the schedule of group meetings.

What happens when you stop?

Within 20 minutes of the last cigarette:

- Your blood pressure drops to your normal range.
- Your pulse rate drops to your normal rate.
- The body temperature of your hands and feet increases to normal.

After eight hours:

- The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
- The oxygen level in your blood increases to normal.

After 24 hours:

- Your risk of heart attack decreases.

After two days:

- Your sense of taste and smell come back.
- Your nerve endings begin regrowing.

After three days:

- Your bronchial tubes relax, making breathing easier.

After one week to three months:

- Nicotine is completely gone from your system.
- Your circulation improves.
- Your body's overall energy level increases.
- Exercise becomes easier.
- Your lung function increases up to 30 percent.
- Coughing, sinus congestion and shortness of breath decrease.

After one year:

- The cleansing ability of your lungs returns.
- Your risk of stroke and lung disease decreases.

After five years:

- Your risk of lung cancer and other cancers drops greatly.



CHRISTIANA CARE
HEALTH SYSTEM

Center for Heart & Vascular Health