



# YOUR GUIDE TO QUIT SMOKING

**Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health.  
Congratulations on taking your first step towards quitting smoking.  
You can do it!**

## DISCLAIMER

*This purpose of this booklet is to share information. It does not replace advice, diagnosis, or treatment from your doctor. See your doctor before you start a quitting smoking program, and while you are trying to quit. You should only use medications (including over-the-counter medications) as directed by your doctor. Drawings and diagrams are not to scale. They are for illustration only. MGH/TEHN does not take responsibility for any incorrect or missing information. MGH/TEHN does not take responsibility for any negative outcomes from using the information in this booklet. This includes damages or injury to you, others, or your property.*

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# THE DANGERS

## WHY IS SMOKING BAD FOR ME?

- Smoking is very bad for your health.
- Tobacco leaves are used in cigarettes. Tobacco smoke is a deadly poison. Breathing in tobacco smoke is very harmful.
- **37,000** Canadians **die every year** from smoking.<sup>1</sup>
- Someone who smokes lives about 10 years less than someone who doesn't smoke.<sup>2</sup>

Smoking can cause many health issues. Examples are:

- Lung cancer.
- Emphysema/Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).
- Heart attacks.
- Strokes.
- High blood pressure.
- Circulation problems (men who smoke are 2 times as likely to have erectile dysfunction).
- Cancers of the mouth, tongue, and voice-box.
- Cancers in other areas of the body (like breast, pancreas, cervical, liver, kidney, bladder, and blood [Leukemia]).
- Tooth decay and gum disease.
- Weak bones (also called osteoporosis).
- Lung infections that can make you very sick (like pneumonia, flu, and COVID-19).

Second-hand smoke can cause problems in babies and children like:

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Asthma.

Tobacco smoke has chemicals that can make you very sick. They can cause disease and cancers.<sup>3</sup> There are over 4000 chemicals in tobacco smoke:

- Carbon monoxide (found in car exhaust).
- Arsenic (rat poison).
- Ammonia (found in toilet cleaner).
- Acetone (found in nail polish remover).
- Hydrogen Cyanide (gas chamber poison).
- Napthalene (found in mothballs).
- Sulphur compounds (found in matches).
- Lead.
- Formaldehyde (used as embalming fluid).

# THE BENEFITS

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS IF I QUIT SMOKING?

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health!

When you quit, good things start happening almost right away<sup>4</sup>:

- Within 20 minutes of quitting: your blood pressure and heart rate improve.
- After 24 hours of quitting: your risk of a heart attack is less.
- After 2-12 weeks of quitting: your circulation is better. Your lung function is better by up to 20%.
- After 1 year of quitting: your risk of a smoking related heart attack is cut in half.
- After 10 years of quitting: your risk of dying from lung cancer is cut in half.

The sooner you quit, the more years you can add to your life<sup>2</sup>:

- If you quit before age 39: you can add 9 years to your life on average.
- If you quit before age 49: you can add 6 years to your life on average.
- If you quit before age 59: you can add 4 years to your life on average.

It is never too late to quit. There are many health benefits no matter how old you are!

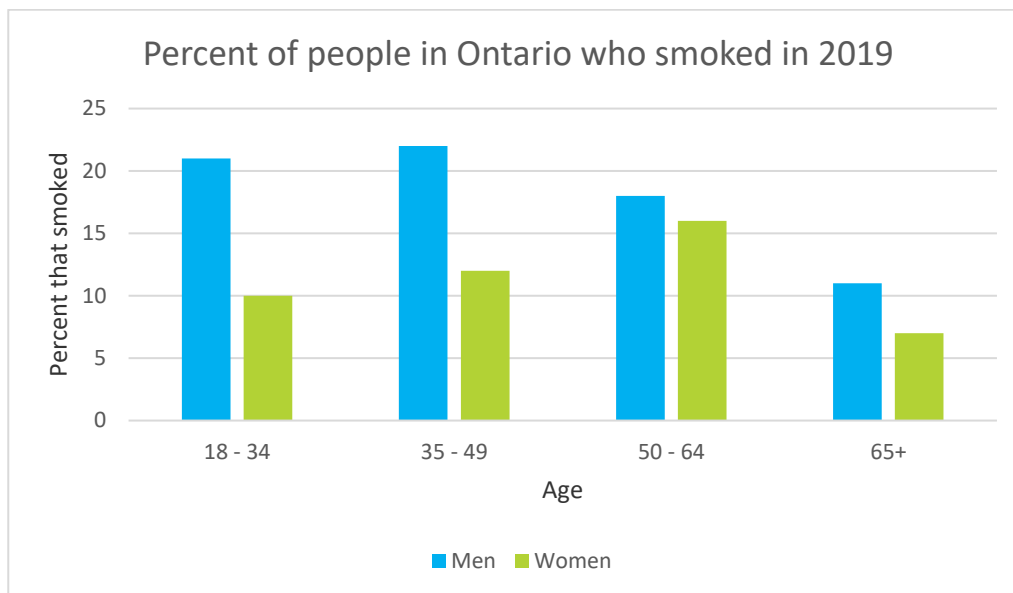
Also, when you quit smoking<sup>4</sup>:

- Your breath will be fresher.
- Your food will taste better.
- Your family will be healthier.
- Your wound healing will be better.
- Your risk of problems after surgery is lower.
- You can save lots of money by not buying cigarettes!

# SMOKING IN ONTARIO

## HOW MANY PEOPLE SMOKE IN ONTARIO?

- About 1.7 million people in Ontario smoked in 2019.<sup>5</sup>
- This is 13% of the people who live in the province.



If you have a friend or family member who smokes, now is a great time for you to quit together!

- Second-hand smoke is also dangerous to your family and your pets.
- You will do a better job of not smoking if you are not around other people who smoke.

## WHERE CAN I GET HELP TO QUIT?

### **Smoker's helpline**

1-877-513-5333

[www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca)

### **The Lung Association**

1-888-566-LUNG (5864)

<https://www.lung.ca/lung-health/smoking-and-tobacco>

### **Toronto Public Health**

Live Tobacco Free

[www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca) (search "Live Tobacco-Free")  
or

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/health-wellness-care/health-programs-advice/live-tobacco-free/>

### **Health Canada**

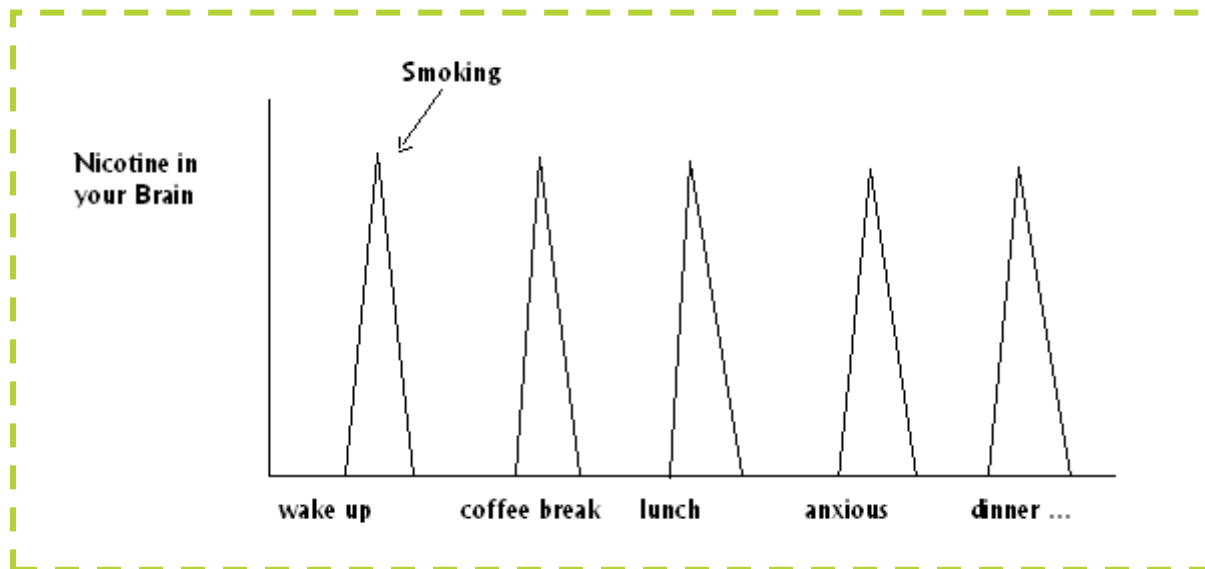
On the Road to Quitting

[www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca) (search "On the Road to Quitting")  
or <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/road-quitting-guide-becoming-non-smoker.html>

# ABOUT NICOTINE ADDICTION

## WHAT IS NICOTINE ADDICTION?

- Nicotine is found in tobacco. Nicotine is very addictive. It is as addictive as alcohol, heroin, or crack cocaine.<sup>6</sup>
- When you smoke, nicotine reaches your brain within 20 seconds and makes you feel good.
- When the nicotine wears off, you have an urge to smoke again.
- Before you know it, you will have smoked many times in a day.



## DO I HAVE A NICOTINE ADDICTION?

Do I smoke more than 10 cigarettes in a day?

☐ **Yes** → I have nicotine addiction

Do I smoke within 30 minutes of waking up in the morning?

☐ **Yes** → I have nicotine addiction

Do I have withdrawal symptoms when I try to quit smoking?

☐ **Yes** → I have nicotine addiction

Do I keep smoking even though I have health problems?

☐ **Yes** → I have nicotine addiction

Have I tried to quit before but have failed?

☐ **Yes** → I have nicotine addiction

# ABOUT NICOTINE ADDICTION

## WHAT HAPPENS WITH NICOTINE ADDICTION?

- When you smoke, you teach your brain to connect smoking to the activity you are doing.
- When your brain gets used to this connection, the activity will **trigger** you to smoke. For example, your brain will tell you to smoke:
  - Every morning when you get up.
  - Every time you drink coffee or alcohol.
  - Every time you have fun.
  - Every time you are sad, depressed, anxious, or angry.
- Smoking quickly becomes a regular habit and part of your everyday life.
- When you learn what your **triggers** are, you will be able to:
  - Stay away from your triggers.
  - Challenge the urge to smoke when you come across a trigger.

## WHAT IS HAND-TO-MOUTH ADDICTION?

- When you smoke, your brain gets used to moving your hand to your mouth.
- People who smoke do this motion up to 100 000 times a year.
- When you first quit, it will take some time to get used to not doing this motion.

# GETTING READY TO QUIT

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM READY TO QUIT?

- Think about the times you have tried to quit before.
- On average, it takes a person who smokes 7 tries to quit.
- If you start smoking again after you quit, you can learn from your past attempts and try again!
- Think about what worked before and what didn't. Use that knowledge to help you quit for good.

### **Option 1: Set a Quit Date**

Pick a day when you are going to quit. Try to pick a day that will be free of stress, celebrations, or life changes.

### **Option 2: Make a Gradual Reduction Plan**

Cut down the number of cigarettes you smoke each day or week until you have fully quit smoking.

## WHAT MEDICATIONS CAN HELP ME QUIT?

- There are medications that can help you quit smoking.
- People do a better job with quitting when they use medications. People who quit “cold turkey” aren't as successful at quitting.
- Medications that can help you quit are:
  1. Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)
  2. Varenicline
  3. Zyban® (Wellbutrin)

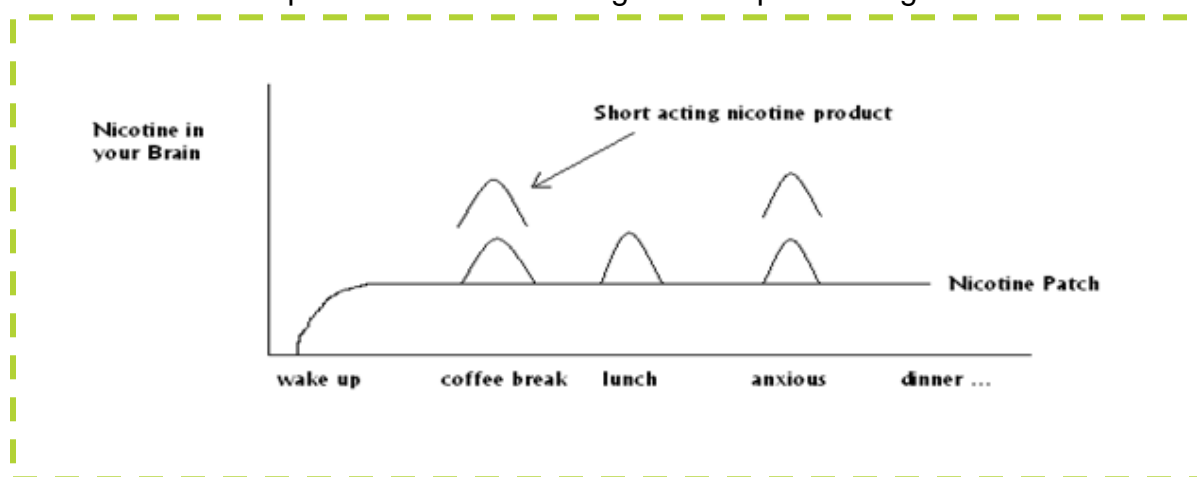


# MEDICATIONS

## ABOUT NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

### WHAT IS NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (NRT)?<sup>2</sup>

- NRT is a way for your body to get nicotine without smoking.
  - You do not need a prescription for NRT. Your pharmacist can help you buy it over the counter.
  - Please read the disclaimer on page 1.
  - You need to use NRT the right way for it to work.<sup>7</sup> For example:
1. Use a nicotine patch to get a baseline level of nicotine in your blood. A patch will not make you feel like you are smoking a cigarette. The patch typically does not give you as much nicotine as a cigarette does. The patch will lessen your cravings and lower your nicotine withdrawal.
  2. Use a short acting nicotine product when you have a craving. A short acting nicotine product gives you a burst of nicotine. This helps satisfy your craving without a cigarette. Examples are:
    - Nicotine spray.
    - Nicotine lozenge.
    - Nicotine inhaler.
    - Nicotine gum.
  3. You can use a nicotine patch and a short acting nicotine product together



### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF NICOTINE WITHDRAWAL?

The symptoms of nicotine withdrawal are:

- Anxiety.
- Feeling irritable.
- Feeling restless.
- Trouble concentrating.
- Very bad cravings.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Feeling more hungry than normal.
- Headaches.

Withdrawal is usually the worst in the first week. It usually gets better after the first week.

# MEDICATIONS

## **WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF NICOTINE REPLACEMENT?\***

Some people may have:

- Skin rash or irritation from patch.
- Headaches.
- Nightmares.
- Nausea, vomiting, or upset stomach.

*\*Talk to your doctor about all side effects and drug interactions. See the full list of side effects, drug interactions, risks, and benefits included with the product. Only use medications if directed by your doctor. Before starting a new medication, tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are pregnant, are planning to become pregnant, or are on the birth control pill.*

# MEDICATIONS

## ABOUT VARENICLINE

### WHAT IS VARENICLINE?

- Varenicline blocks the nicotine receptors in your brain. This lessens the “high” from smoking. It also lessens feelings of withdrawal.
- Varenicline is taken every day for 12-weeks.
- You need a prescription for Varenicline. Please read the disclaimer on page 1.

### WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF VARENICLINE?\*

Some people may have:

- Nausea, vomiting, constipation, diarrhea, or gas.
- Trouble sleeping, vivid dreams, nightmares, or sleepwalking.
- Headaches.
- Risk of changes in mood. Examples are agitation, aggression, or hostility.
- Risk of self-harm or harm to others.
- Risk of sudden heart attack or stroke.
- Sleepiness, dizziness, accidents, or falls. Do not drive if you feel tired or dizzy.
- Allergic reactions. Reactions may be mild or severe anaphylactic reactions.
- Moderate to severe skin rashes.
- Risk of seizures.

*\*Talk to your doctor about all side effects and drug interactions. See the full list of side effects, drug interactions, risks, and benefits included with the product. Only use medications if directed by your doctor. Before starting a new medication, tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are pregnant, are planning to become pregnant, or are on the birth control pill.*

### WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE MOOD CHANGES?

- Quitting smoking is hard. Nicotine withdrawal and medications to help you quit smoking can lead to changes in your mood and thoughts.
- Stop taking your medication if you have changes in your mood, or you have thoughts about harming yourself or others.
- Go to the closest emergency department right away or call 911.

# MEDICATIONS

## **WHEN SHOULD I STOP TAKING VARENICLINE?**

You should stop taking your medication if you have serious side effects. You should seek medical attention right away. Serious side effects are:

- Allergic reaction.
- Very bad skin reaction.
- Mental health problems.
- Heart attack or stroke.
- Seizures.
- Sleepwalking.

# MEDICATIONS

## ABOUT ZYBAN® (WELLBUTRIN)

### WHAT IS ZYBAN® (WELLBUTRIN)?

- Zyban® is an antidepressant medication. It helps people quit smoking.
- You need a prescription for Zyban®. Please read the disclaimer on page 1.

### WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF ZYBAN®?\*

Some people may have:

- Trouble sleeping.
- Headaches.
- Dry mouth.
- Nausea.
- Constipation.
- Dizziness.
- Ringing in the ears.
- Risk of seizures.
- Risk of liver inflammation and low sodium levels.
- Allergic reactions. Reactions may be mild or severe anaphylactic reactions.
- Risk of changes in mood. Examples are agitation, aggression, or hostility.
- Risk of self-harm or harm to others.
- Risk of drug interactions including monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs). Review all your medications with your doctor and pharmacist before starting a new medicine.

*\*Talk to your doctor about all side effects and drug interactions. See the full list of side effects, drug interactions, risks, and benefits included with the product. Only use medications if directed by your doctor. Before starting a new medication, tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are pregnant, are planning to become pregnant, or are on the birth control pill.*

### WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE MOOD CHANGES?

- Quitting smoking is hard. Nicotine withdrawal and medications to help you quit smoking can lead to changes in your mood and thoughts.
- Stop taking your medication if you have changes in your mood, or you have thoughts about harming yourself or others.
- Go to the closest emergency department right away or call 911.

# MEDICATIONS

## **WHEN SHOULD I STOP TAKING ZYBAN®?**

You should stop taking your medication if you have serious side effects. You should seek medical attention right away. Serious side effects are:

- Allergic reactions.
- Very bad skin reactions.
- Mental health problems.
- Liver inflammation.
- Seizures.
- Low sodium levels.

## **ABOUT E-CIGARETTES/VAPING**

### **WHAT IS AN E-CIGARETTE/VAPING?<sup>8</sup>**

- Vaping is inhaling the vapour from an e-cigarette. E-cigarettes are battery-powered smoking devices. They use heat to turn a flavoured liquid into vapour.
- There are health risks with vaping. Vaping can lead to serious lung injury and death. We do not know what the long term health impacts of vaping are.
- Talk to your doctor and pharmacist about the risks of vaping if you are thinking of trying it.
- In general, vaping is not recommended as a tool to help you quit smoking.
- Please read the disclaimer on page 1.

# MORE REASONS TO QUIT

## ABOUT SMOKING AND SURGERY

### WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT SMOKING & SURGERY?

- Surgery is safer for people who don't smoke.<sup>9,10,11,12</sup>
- People who smoke are about 3 times more likely to have complications from surgery.
- People who smoke are about 6 times more likely to have infections after surgery.
- People who smoke take longer to get better after surgery.
- People who smoke go back to the hospital more often after surgery.

**The longer you have quit smoking before a surgery, the better.  
Quitting at least 6-8 weeks before of surgery is best.**

## ABOUT SMOKING AND MENTAL ILLNESS

### WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT SMOKING & MENTAL ILLNESS?

You can still quit smoking if you have mental illness. Examples are depression, anxiety, bipolar, and schizophrenia. Here are some things to remember:<sup>13,14</sup>

- Smoking is NOT your friend.
- Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health.
- Talk to your doctors and pharmacist about how to quit smoking with mental illness. Your medications (like antidepressant or anti-schizophrenic medications) may need to be changed so you don't have more depression symptoms or schizophrenic hallucinations.

# MORE REASONS TO QUIT

## ABOUT SMOKING AND PREGNANCY

### WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT SMOKING & PREGNANCY?<sup>15</sup>

Smoking is harmful for you and your baby. It is best if you quit smoking before you become pregnant, but it is never too late to quit! Talk to your doctor and pharmacist about how to quit smoking during pregnancy.

Here are some of the risks to your baby when you smoke during pregnancy:

- Exposure to thousands of toxins in smoke.
- Premature delivery.
- Growth restriction.
- Miscarriage.
- Stillbirth.
- Possible increase in birth defects.
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Infant chest infections, asthma, and allergies.
- Short stature and obesity.
- Lower reading and spelling scores.
- Hyperactivity and shorter attention spans.
- Increased risk that your child will smoke.

Here are some of the risks to you when you smoke during pregnancy:

- Infertility.
- Less blood flow to your uterus, placenta, and baby.
- Greater risk of serious problems during pregnancy that could be life-threatening to you and your baby. Examples are:
  - Tearing away of the placenta.
  - Poor positioning of the placenta.
  - Pregnancy developing outside of the uterus.



# ON MY QUIT DAY

## WHAT SHOULD I DO ON MY QUIT DAY?<sup>16</sup>

- Congratulate yourself on your first day without smoking! Feel good about the positive change you are making.
- Remove cigarettes, ashtrays, and lighters from your home, pockets, purse, and car.
- Keep yourself busy.
- Stay away from your triggers. This may mean that you need to change your routine.
- Have less caffeine. Drink less coffee, energy drinks, and pop. When you quit smoking, the breakdown of caffeine in your body goes down. For example, if you drink the same amount of coffee when you quit smoking, your caffeine level will be higher. You may feel anxious, stressed, and have trouble sleeping. These symptoms can be confused with nicotine withdrawal and lead you to smoke again.

Make a plan to cope with withdrawal:

- *Feeling tense and irritable?* You can distract yourself, take a break, or take deep breaths.
- *Trouble concentrating?* You can break your task into small bits.
- *Difficulty sleeping?* Try to stay away from caffeine. Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, pop, and chocolate.
- *Gaining weight?* Talk to your doctor to help you deal with stress and control your weight.
- *Feeling low?* Call a friend or a smokers' helpline.
- *Wanting help?* Think about trying nicotine replacement therapy products as directed by your doctor.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE CRAVINGS?

Try to remember the 4 Ds:

- **Do something else:** This will take your mind off smoking.
- **Delay:** Wait a few minutes. You can use nicotine replacement therapy as directed by your doctor.
- **Deep breathing:** Do deep breathing exercises. This can help you relax.
- **Drink water:** Sip slowly. Hold the water in your mouth for a while before you swallow.

# STAYING AN EX-SMOKER

## **HOW CAN I STAY AN EX-SMOKER?<sup>16,17</sup>**

- Take it one day at a time. Set small goals. For example, try to not smoke for the next 24 hours.
- Stay away from your triggers and places that make you want to smoke.
- Stay away from other people who smoke. Stay away from too much alcohol. These are common causes to start smoking again.
- Remember that it gets easier as time goes on.
- The addiction will fade over time. The urges will get weaker. You will also get more skilled at dealing with urges.
- Do not believe your doubts and negative thoughts.
- A slip (puffing on a cigarette) does NOT make you a smoker again. You are not a failure. You can get back on track.
- Learn from your experience if you slip up. Try to identify the trigger, and make a plan for what you can do differently next time. You are learning to cope. It may take time.
- Keep trying. Most people who smoke take more than 1 try to quit.
- Believe in yourself and take control!

## **WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS I SHOULD KNOW?**

- Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health!
- Keep trying! Even if it feels like a lot of work. It often takes more than 1 try to quit smoking. It will be worth the effort!
- Talk to your doctors and pharmacist for help to quit smoking.

# MY PLAN TO QUIT SMOKING

Why do I like to smoke? I like to smoke because...

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Why do I want to quit? I want to quit because...

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When do I smoke? Fill out this chart to help you see the patterns to your smoking.

What was the date and time when I smoked?	Why did I smoke?	Where was I when I smoked?	Who was I with when I smoked?
(i.e., Nov 5, 9:00am)	(i.e., woke up)	(i.e., in bed)	(i.e., my spouse)

Are there things that make me want to smoke? These are called triggers.

- |                                       |                                    |                                  |                                  |  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waking up    | <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee    | <input type="checkbox"/> Meals   | <input type="checkbox"/> Work    | <input type="checkbox"/> Breaks        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stress       | <input type="checkbox"/> Angry/Sad | <input type="checkbox"/> Coping  | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Social events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex       | <input type="checkbox"/> Boredom |                                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |                                    |                                  |                                  |  |

When is my quit date? \_\_\_\_\_

What is my plan for cutting down towards quitting?

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My doctor's appointments:

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