

Are You **READY** to Quit Smoking?

How Do I Make This Quit Smoking Attempt Successful?

Set up a quit plan with your doctor and try using the **READY** approach (outlined below). Quitting smoking is difficult. That's because the nicotine in tobacco is an addictive drug.¹ Most smokers have tried to quit more than once, so don't feel discouraged if you have tried before.² On average, smokers will attempt to quit smoking six to nine times.³ Fortunately, past attempts make your chance of success better the next time.⁴

Consider Using the READY Approach

The **READY** approach may help guide you to a more successful attempt. Once you're **READY**, set a date when you will quit – in two weeks or less. On your quit date, do not smoke even one puff.¹ If you cannot stop smoking on your quit date, pick another and try again.

- **R**easons to quit. Think about the benefits of not smoking (i.e., better health, save money).
- **E**ncouragement from others. Getting support from others will help you quit smoking.
- **A**nticipate your triggers. Figure out what makes you want to smoke, and how to overcome it.
- **D**octor support. Be sure to talk to your doctor about what may help you quit smoking.
- **Y**ou set the time. You have to make a commitment to quit smoking, and set a quit date.

Make Sure Your Quit Smoking Plan Includes Counseling and Medication

Medical guidelines suggest treatment that includes both medication and behavioral counseling.⁵ Research shows that stop-smoking medicines can double or triple your odds of quitting.^{5,6} Only three to five percent of smokers are able to quit smoking on their own without counseling or treatment and stay quit for up to one year.⁷

Some Additional Tips

- Write out reasons for quitting smoking and place the list where you will see it often
- Make a detailed “quit smoking plan” with a timeline and “rewards” for reaching milestones
- Find a “quit buddy” and create a support network of people who will help you
- Take one day at a time

Once You Stop Smoking, Benefits Start Right Away⁸

- In minutes, your blood pressure may go down
- After just one day, your chance of a heart attack may go down
- Between one and nine months, expect less coughing, congestion and shortness of breath

¹ US Department of Health and Human Services, US Public Health Service. You can quit smoking: consumer guide. June 2000. www.ahrq.gov/consumer/tobacco/card.htm. Accessed April 6, 2008.

² Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, US Public Health Service. Patients not ready to make a quit attempt now (the 5 “Rs”). www.ahrq.gov/clinic/tobacco/5rs.htm. Accessed March 1, 2008.

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Women and smoking. A report of the Surgeon General-2001. www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/sgr_2001/index.htm. Accessed February 13, 2008.

⁴ Mayo Clinic. Smoking cessation: take it one day at a time. www.mayoclinic.com/health/smoking-cessation/SK00055. Accessed February 29, 2008.

⁵ Fiore MC, Jaen CR, Baker TB, et al. Clinical Practice Guideline: Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: 2008 Update. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. Public Health Service; 2008.

⁶ American Cancer Society. Double your chances of quitting smoking. October 23, 2007. www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_10_3x_Double_Your_Chances.asp. Accessed March 1, 2008.

⁷ Hughes JR, Keeley J, Naud S. Shape of the relapse curve and long-term abstinence among untreated smokers. *Addiction*. 2004;99:29-38.

⁸ American Lung Association. Quit smoking: benefits. www.lungusa.org/site/pp.asp?c=dvLUK900E&b=33568. Accessed February 29, 2008.