

## Why People Smoke

Most people start smoking when they're young, have poor judgement, and are easily influenced by what others are doing – then find they can't stop.

Inside the brain of a smoker, nicotine pretends to be other chemicals that belong there, and **stimulates the pleasure and reward mechanisms**, fooling you that it's pleasant and rewarding to poison yourself. It also boosts a brain chemical involved in **learning and memory**, so you learn to be a smoker and you remember the reward feelings really clearly.

Some people smoke as a **ritual**, others as a **habit**. In both cases, it's a way of distracting themselves from their lives – a way that doesn't solve any of their problems and that causes them more problems.

Some people smoke to **manage their stress and emotions**. But a study in the UK showed that, on average, smokers were less happy and had a poorer quality of life than nonsmokers – and this improved after they gave up. Smoking also keeps your body stressed and keyed-up – it's a really bad way to manage stress.

Finally, some people smoke because trying to give up gives them **distressing feelings**, and they feel they can't push past that to get all the benefits and lose all the negatives.

This brochure may help.

*There is no problem so terrible that poisoning yourself is a good solution.*

## 10 Reasons to Stop

1. **Health risks** to nearly every part of your body, especially your heart, lungs and brain. Your chances of having a heart attack, stroke, many kinds of cancer, and lung diseases start reducing when you stop smoking.
2. **Appearance** of your skin. Smoking makes you look older and turns your skin wrinkled and leathery.
3. **Smell** of your clothes, hair, breath, home, and car.
4. **Breathlessness** when climbing stairs and walking.
5. **Coughing** in the morning.
6. **Your children** will have fewer coughs, colds, and earaches and be less likely to smoke themselves.
7. **Sleep** is deeper and more refreshing when you don't smoke.
8. **Energy** for physical activities won't be diverted to healing the damage from smoke.
9. **Money** is going up in smoke every day you are a smoker – think what else you could do with it!
10. **Control** of your life should belong to you, not nicotine. Get back your self-respect and self-confidence by kicking the habit.

*"Refuse to fall down.*

*If you cannot refuse to fall down,  
refuse to stay down."*

*– C.P. Estes*

## 10 Tips for Stopping

1. **Write down for yourself** the things you don't like about smoking and the benefits of being smokefree. Carry the paper with you as a reminder.
2. **Notice your triggers** (the activities that you associate with smoking) and plan how to deal with them. Write down your plan, too. Breaking your routine, even slightly, will help. For example, If you smoke when you have coffee, switch to tea, and drink it in a different chair.
3. **Remove all tobacco** from your house, car, and wherever else you keep it. Don't replace it or "borrow" from other people.
4. **Designate smokefree areas** like your car, your house etc. Increase them until the world is a smokefree area for you.
5. **Imagine** yourself in a few years' time if you go on smoking – how unhealthy and unhappy you'll be. Then imagine what you could do instead if you were smokefree. Decide that the second one is your future, and it starts now.
6. **Get support** from friends and family to stop and stay stopped. (Your friends and relatives who smoke are also much likelier to stop if you do.)
7. **Write down your rationalizations** for smoking and then write down why they aren't true.
8. **Reward yourself** when you don't smoke. Replace the fake "reward" of a cigarette with a real reward.
9. **Look for better ways** to deal with stress, anxiety and strong emotions. Deep breathing and exercise are good.
10. **Get help** from the agencies and groups listed on the back of this brochure. It increases your chances of success if you don't try to go it alone.

## Dealing with Recovery Effects

Your body adapted to being regularly poisoned when you started smoking, and when you stop it adapts again and goes through a "detox" for about 1-2 weeks. You may notice irritation, anxiety, depression, trouble concentrating, sleep difficulties, coughing, sore throat, constipation, or the desire to eat more. To deal with this:

1. **Breathe** deeply to help your lungs clean out.
2. **Drink** less coffee, tea and caffeinated soft drink, and more water and fruit juice. Nicotine reduces the effect of caffeine, so you don't need as much when you're not smoking. Water and fruit juice help the detox process.
3. **Eat** fruit between meals and at the start of meals to help you detox and reduce your desire to eat sugary foods. Also try sugar-free gum, carrots or celery sticks.
4. **Move** around if you feel cravings, anxiety or anger. Exercise will increase your oxygen flow, distract you, and help your body throw off the poisons.
5. **Do something else with your hands** if you're restless.
6. **Change** your routine so that you don't fall into old habits.
7. **Notice** what's happening with your body, mind and emotions. Let the feelings come and then *let them go*. They will usually only last a few minutes.
8. **Think** about your reasons for stopping. Think of nicotine as the poison it is.
9. **Talk or write** about how you feel. Putting feelings into words reduces their power.
10. **If you start again, stop again.** Perhaps try a different method of giving up – there are several.

## For More Information and Help

Information is like owning a map; it helps you know where you're going and how to get there. But to actually get there, you need to start moving.

### *These websites have free resources:*

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://cdc.gov/tobacco>)

Smokefree (<http://smokefree.gov>)

Become an Ex (<http://becomeanex.org>)

Health Education Resources (<http://healthed.govt.nz>)

Action on Smoking and Health (<http://ash.org.nz>)

Cancer Society (<http://www.cancernz.org.nz>)

### *These groups can help you stop smoking:*

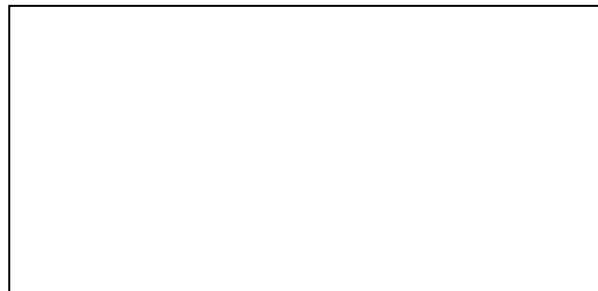
Quitline, 0800 778 778 (<http://www.quit.org.nz>)

NZ Association of Professional Hypnotherapists (<http://nzaph.co.nz>)

The Cancer Society (<http://www.cancernz.org.nz>) maintains a directory of stop-smoking programmes.

### *Acknowledgements*

Sources include: Adam Eason (<http://adam-eason.com>) for some of the 10 Tips, US National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>) for the 10 Reasons, and various resources from the websites listed above.



# Becoming Smokefree, Staying Smokefree



Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the western world, and cigarettes are the only product in the world that regularly kills the consumer when used as the manufacturer intended.

You've probably heard these and many other facts before, but despite all the excellent reasons for quitting, many people have trouble stopping this expensive, unhealthy and increasingly socially unacceptable habit.