

## Step 5: Be Prepared For Relapse

Relapse is common when attempting to quit tobacco. It is important to be prepared when it happens.

Most relapses occur within the first three months after quitting. Do not be discouraged if you slip and start smoking again. It doesn't mean that you cannot succeed at quitting for good. Remember, most people try to quit several times before they finally quit.

Here are some difficult situations to watch for:

- **Other smokers**—Avoid being around people who are smoking, this can make you want to start up again.
- **Bad mood or depression**—Go out for a breath of fresh air and engage in other activities you enjoy. See your doctor if there is no improvement or symptoms get worse.
- **Boredom**—Keep busy. Start a new hobby, volunteer for a local organization and visit with tobacco-free friends.

If you are having problems with any of these situations, talk to your doctor, nurse or other health care professionals.

### IF YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT QUITTING, CONTACT:

Addiction Services \_\_\_\_\_

Smokers' Helpline 1-877-513-5333

Family Doctor \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Care Nurse/Nurse Practitioner \_\_\_\_\_

Pharmacists and /other PACT professionals—refer to:

PACT program— <http://www.makeapact.ca/>



Adapted with permission from Saskatoon Health Region

# 5 Steps for Quitting Tobacco



- **Get Ready**
- **Get Support**
- **Learn New Skills and Behaviours**
- **Get Medication and Use It Correctly**
- **Be Prepared For Relapse**



## Step 1: Get Ready

Set a quit date and have a quit plan.

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
shall stop using tobacco as of \_\_\_\_\_.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Suggestions for a quit plan are:**

- Change your environment—get rid of all cigarettes and ashtrays in your home, cabin and vehicle; clean these areas as best you can to eliminate tobacco odours.
- Plan to inform people that they cannot smoke in your home, cabin and vehicle.
- Think about past quit attempts—what worked well and what did not.
- Plan to get rid of all cigarettes and once you quit to not smoke at all...EVEN A PUFF!
- Plan to be more active. Think about things that you like to do and plan to do these more often. Being physically active can help to reduce symptoms of cravings and withdrawal.
- Have healthy snacks, and sugar-free gum on hand.

## Step 2: Get Support

Your chance of success increases when you have help.

- Tell your family, friends and co-workers that you are going to quit and want their support. Ask them not to smoke around you or offer tobacco.
- Talk to your doctor, nurse, or other healthcare professional.
- Get individual, group or telephone counselling. The more counselling you have, the better your chances of quitting.

## Step 3: Learn New Skills and Behaviours

You need to recognize the “triggers” that make you want to smoke. For example, if you have a cigarette after a meal, leave the table immediately after eating and go to a different room or go for a walk instead. Other examples are:

- Try to distract yourself from urges to smoke. Talk to someone, go for a walk, or get busy with a task like brushing your teeth.
- Change your routine. Use a different route to work, drink milk, juice or tea instead of coffee; eat breakfast in a different place.
- Reduce your stress by taking a bath, exercising or reading a book.
- Drink lots of water.

### **REMEMBER**

*Tobacco cravings last 3-5 minutes ... less time than it takes to have a cigarette. The cravings will become fewer and farther between the longer you stay tobacco-free.*

## Step 4: Get Medication and Use it Correctly

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can help you quit tobacco. These products provide clean nicotine delivery to your body and help with cravings and withdrawal while your body adjusts to quitting. ***If you are pregnant, breastfeeding, have heart disease, diabetes or other medical conditions, talk to your doctor before using nicotine replacement therapies.***

Nicotine patch, nicotine gum, nicotine inhaler and nicotine lozenges are examples of NRTs available without a prescription. You should not smoke or use chewing tobacco while using nicotine replacements. It is best to consult your doctor or pharmacist for advice about patch, gum and inhaler suitable for you.

*\* Nicotine gum may not be well tolerated by chewing tobacco users due to sores that may be present in the mouth.*

Prescription medication is also available from your doctor in the form of ZYBAN® and CHAMPIX® .