

QUITTING



For most people, quitting smoking for good is very hard. Why? Nicotine is an extremely addictive drug. Over time the smoker becomes physically and psychologically dependent on nicotine. The effects produced by nicotine and the behaviours associated with smoking become necessary to maintain the smoker's optimal state of well-being. **But you can quit.**

It is Never Too Late to Quit

Quitting smoking represents the single most important step that a smoker can take to increase the length and quality of their life. It does not matter how long you have smoked or how much you have smoked, if you quit your risk of heart disease, lung disease, cancer and stroke are reduced tremendously. In fact, in time your risk of heart disease and stroke will be about the same as if you have never smoked.

1 YEAR AFTER QUITTING - the excessive risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker!

15 YEARS AFTER QUITTING- the risk of coronary heart disease is the same as a nonsmoker!

Smoking also harms thousands of nonsmokers exposed to cigarette smoke, including infants and children.

Other Benefits of Quitting Smoking

In addition to health benefits, other benefits include-

- **Improved appearance** - sweeter breath, cleaner teeth, better smelling hair and clothes.
- **Enhanced senses of taste and smell.**
- **Increased savings** - smoking is expensive.
- **Improved health of family, friends and pets due to decrease in second-hand smoke** (passive smoking).
- **Increased social acceptability** - by landlords, employers, relatives, friends and romantic partners.
- **Better role model for children.**

Another reason to quit smoking is the increasing legislation that bans smoking in most public places both indoors and in the immediate surroundings, notably schools and hospitals.

But I Have Tried Many Times

Very few people are able to quit forever the first time they try. Maybe you too have tried to quit on your own many times and it has not been successful.

Without any aids to help with withdrawal, 5% to 15% of people are able to quit smoking for up to 6 months. Articles in medical journals report that 25% to 33% of people can quit smoking for up to 6 months if they use medical aids. Behavioural and support therapies may increase the success rates even further.

For many it is hard to break the social and emotional bonds to smoking while at the same time dealing with the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.



Nicotine Replacement Therapies

70% to 90% of smokers state that their only reason for not quitting smoking is the withdrawal symptoms and cravings. Nicotine replacement therapy can relieve some of these symptoms by providing nicotine without the other harmful chemicals in cigarettes. Forms include - patches, gum, sprays, inhalers and lozenges. While they help you deal with the physical aspects of dependence, they should be combined with other programs to address the psychological components of smoking.

If You Want to Quit Smoking

There are a number of well-established programs available to the general public, and therefore to you, at no cost. Using proven techniques, these programs have assisted thousands of Canadians. The primary resource is the **QuitNow Services**, offered by the BC Lung Association through-

- www.quitnow.ca - an internet-based quit smoking service, available FREE-of-charge that combines effective methods for quitting smoking with an individualized program that is available anytime and anyplace.
- **1.877.455.2233** - a confidential, FREE-of-charge helpline, available 24/7 staffed by especially trained registered nurses who are there to listen and provide support and guidance. The service is available in numerous languages.



LATEST STATS CANADA SURVEY SHOWS THE WAR AGAINST SMOKING IS BEING WON

- ✓ Fewer Canadians than ever are smokers
- ✓ Those who smoke, smoke less
- ✓ Fewer teens are smoking, but are more likely to be exposed to second-hand smoke
- ✓ Non-smokers are exposed to less secondhand smoke

Although there is no strong evidence they can increase your chances of success, other methods people have tried include: the anticholinergic drugs atropine and scopolamine, hypnosis, acupuncture, cold laser therapy, etc.

Yes, it is hard, but you can quit smoking. All of us know someone who has successfully quit smoking for good. If you have any health concerns that may be related to your smoking see your physician. Ask your physician what methods might be best for you.

Also the EFAP counsellors would be pleased to discuss your situation and provide support for the plan you adopt.

For confidential assistance
Brown Crawshaw 1.800.668.2055
www.browncrawshaw.com