

Here is some helpful hints/info for those of you who have decided to Quit Smoking.

Many smokers will have made a resolution to quit this year. There is a range of products on the market designed to help smokers. Unfortunately, no treatment can really make you quit unless you have the will-power to do it.

Developing and maintaining your will-power is the most important element of kicking the habit for good. Many people may make a snap decision to quit at New Year and find they are back smoking within days or weeks. In truth, giving up smoking is really more of a New Life Resolution.



Stopping smoking takes time, according to Action on Smoking and Health (ASH). There are four stages in quitting:

- You think about your reasons for stopping.
- You prepare to stop.
- You stop.
- You work on staying stopped

Stage one can take anything from a few days to a few years. Stages two and three can be over hours or may take weeks. Stage four is vital - it may take some months before you can be confident that you will never want another cigarette.

ASH believes that the big question in giving up smoking is whether you really want to stop. If you make up your mind that you are going to stop, then you will. Many people have been surprised how easy it was to stop once they had really made up their mind.

Initially, it can help to use NRT products like nicotine gum and patches. These help to reduce the awful cravings, which recede after a short time anyway. In the longer term, vigilance is important, as a single cigarette can be enough to kick-start the habit all over again.

To help those of you who are thinking about giving up smoking may I suggest the following tips:
(as advised by the Irish Cancer Society)

1. **Prepare to quit smoking** -write down reasons for stopping.
2. **Make a date to stop smoking** - most people who successfully quit smoking do so by stopping altogether and not by gradually cutting down.
3. **Support** - from family and friends.
4. **Change your routine and plan head** - often associated with times and situations.
Work at breaking the link between the association and smoking.
5. **Exercise Regularly** - regular exercises helps to manage your weight and improves the body's ability to meet demands and stresses of daily living.
6. **Think Positive** - Withdrawal symptoms are a sign that your body is recovering from the effects of tobacco. They will disappear within a few weeks.
7. **Learn to deal with cravings:** Craving increases in intensity over a period of 3-5 minutes and then subsides. Remember the 4 D's: Delay at least 3 minutes and urge will pass.
Drink a glass of water or fruit juice.
Distract yourself - move away from situation
Deep breaths. Breathe slowly and deeply.
8. **Start saving money** - put away what you would normally spend on cigarettes and treat yourself.
9. **Watch what you eat** - if worried about gaining weight, be careful not to eat on fatty snacks. Try fruit or sugar free gum.
10. **Take one day at a time** - each day is one more day of success.

Helpful web pages include: <http://www.ash.ie>

Good Luck - Student Health Centre.

