



How to be around smokers

Nicotine is the addictive drug in tobacco. Your body will go through nicotine withdrawal when you try to cut down or stop using tobacco. That is why you might feel some withdrawal symptoms or have a hard time dealing with certain situations that are linked to your tobacco use.

Why does this happen?

- ▶ Seeing a person smoke may trigger the urge to smoke, even if you have not been thinking of smoking for some time. For some, a burnt cigarette may make them want to light up.
- ▶ Some friends and family members may be upset when you decide to quit. They may not even be aware of this.
- ▶ Seeing others smoke may trigger feelings of sadness as if you have lost something close to you.

How common is this?

- ▶ At first, it may be hard to stop taking "smoke breaks" with your smoking buddies but this will pass in time.
- ▶ Stick with your non-smoking friends, family, and co-workers until you get more practice being a non-smoker.
- ▶ If you have relatives or friends who smoke you may have very strong urges to smoke when you see them. Be prepared!
- ▶ As you spend more time with them and don't smoke, the urges will become weaker and weaker.

What can you do about it?

- ▶ Do not buy, carry, light, or hold cigarettes for others.
- ▶ Quit with a buddy.
- ▶ Try not to get angry when family, friends, or co-workers hassle you for quitting.
- ▶ In your first weeks as a non-smoker, try to avoid risky situations with smokers:
- ▶ Ask others to empty ashtrays often, not to leave open packs lying around, and to take their cigarettes with them when they leave.
- ▶ Try to spend time with your smoking friends in places where they cannot smoke—a restaurant, mall, movie theatre, museum, etc.



Be aware that you will not be able to avoid smokers forever, so be prepared to go through some situations with them. Know ahead of time that you may have strong urges so you'll be ready if they happen. Practice turning down the offer of a cigarette. Say it out loud so you get used to hearing yourself say, "No, thanks, I've quit."