



Turn a relapse into something positive

Nothing feels worse than starting to smoke again after quitting. This is called a relapse. Don't get discouraged! You can turn those feelings around and use the relapse to help you quit for good!

How common are relapses?

Relapses are normal. Most people experience relapses before quitting.

How soon after quitting can I feel safe from the possibility of relapse?

- ▶ Most relapses happen within the first 24 hours of quitting, but a relapse may happen after seven or even ninety days without tobacco.
- ▶ Less common, relapse can happen six months after quitting and at the anniversaries of one year, two years, five years and 11 years of being tobacco-free.

How should I feel about a relapse?

- ▶ Remember that quitting isn't easy! People who are try to stop using tobacco are often harder on themselves. Go easy on yourself. Focus on starting to quit again.
- ▶ Remind yourself that relapses are part of the quitting process and think of every relapse as a learning opportunity.

What can I learn from a relapse?

Instead of focusing on your relapse, focus on what you can do differently to increase your chance of quitting for good. Look at what happened surrounding the relapse and try to learn:

- ▶ Why you smoked.
- ▶ What triggers caused you to light up.
- ▶ What situations caused you to want to smoke.
- ▶ How to be better prepared to turn down cigarettes.

It's time to make a better plan to prevent another relapse.





What can I do when I relapse?

- ▶ Stop yourself as soon as you can. Take back control of your life.

 1. Destroy and throw away any cigarettes that are around you. Remove the temptation to smoke.
 2. Think about the reasons why you quit in the first place.
 3. If you are ready, set another Quit Date and congratulate yourself for trying again.
 4. If you don't feel ready to quit, wait a few weeks. Look at and deal with the other issues that make you feel unable to quit.

Avoid another relapse?

Very few relapses occur because of withdrawal symptoms. Plan for triggers that lead to cravings, such as:

1. Pleasant memories of using tobacco or being with tobacco users.
2. Places or situations where you regularly used tobacco.
3. A lot of stress.
4. Times of self-pity, irritability, depression or anxiety.

Prepare for high-risk triggers like being hungry, angry, lonely or tired:

- ▶ Remembering the word "HALT" (hungry, angry, lonely, tired) can help you keep these times and feelings in mind.
- ▶ These are common relapse moments. Take care of yourself and satisfy these needs regularly.

Dominate tobacco cravings with the Five D's:

- ▶ Learning to be tobacco-free is a lifelong process.
- ▶ Understanding how to cope with life, relationships and stress without tobacco is challenging, but knowing yourself and planning ahead will make relapses much easier to avoid.



When you feel the urge to smoke REMEMBER THE 5Ds

1. Delay
2. Drink Water
3. Do Something Else
4. Deep Breathe
5. Discuss With A Friend