

How to stop smoking and start living

Information for patients

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

Every year thousands of people stop smoking. It is the single most important thing you can do to improve your health. Stop for good by believing you can do it.

How can I get information about stopping smoking?

There is an NHS Specialist Stop Smoking Service near to where you live and you can get details by ringing the contact numbers at the end of this leaflet. You can also contact your GP or nearest Pharmacy (chemist) for advice and support.

What is available to help me stop smoking?

There are various options to help cope with the withdrawal from nicotine (the addictive substance that encourages you to continue smoking).

These are:

- **'Cold Turkey'**. This means you stop smoking on your chosen day without any product or support
- **Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)**. There are different types of NRT available, for example, skin patches, chewing gum, lozenges, microtabs, inhalators, nasal or oral sprays and NRT oral strips.

The NRT helps you to give up smoking by mimicking (copying) the nicotine your body is used to. It then reduces the nicotine levels slowly, over a 12-week period. NRT can be bought from pharmacies or the supermarket. If this is your choice, **you must** read and follow the instructions carefully.

NRT can be prescribed by your nearest Specialist Stop Smoking Service after an assessment from a trained advisor or by your own GP. The prescription charge for a 12 week course can be much cheaper than smoking.

- **Varenicline (Champix)**. This is a product that can be very successful in helping you to stop smoking. It works in a very different way to NRT as it slowly blocks the nicotine receptors in your brain, stopping the withdrawal and pleasure you gain from the nicotine. It is a prescription only medication from either your local Specialist Stop Smoking Service or GP, depending on the area in which you live. It is also prescribed over a 12-week period.

All of these products are available and can help you stop smoking but motivation, willpower and wanting to change your behaviours and routines are also very important.

How to stop smoking and start living

Deciding to stop

The first thing you have to do is make up your mind you are going to stop.

What do you stand to gain from stopping smoking?

There will be more money for you and your family, less stress and anxiety, and you will become healthier for the sake of yourself and children.

Have you thought about why you smoke?

Is it:

- to cope with stress
- habit / addiction
- enjoyable
- boredom
- relaxation
- social reasons?

What should I do?

Set a quit date when you will finally stop. It may be tomorrow or after a weekend, but whenever it is, do not leave it more than 1 week. Make sure it isn't when you will be attending social functions that could jeopardise your quit attempt. Telling friends and family will help you stick to your decision.

It is often useful at this point to complete a smoking diary of each cigarette you have and write down how you feel. It is also useful to write down positive and negative thoughts about your smoking, for example, you will become fitter, healthier and save money as opposed to unfit and having less money in your pocket. You may also have other personal reasons to quit.

Preparing to stop

How do I avoid temptation?

Get rid of all of your cigarettes, cigars or tobacco. Make it difficult to smoke in a moment of crisis. Put or throw away your ashtrays, matches, lighters and anything else that will remind you about smoking.

Change your habits, for example:

If you always miss breakfast and smoke a cigarette with a cup of tea or coffee then it is better to have a different drink such as fruit tea or fresh orange juice. Try to start the day with some breakfast such as cereal or toast, to get your metabolism (digestive system) going.

How to stop smoking and start living

- try cleaning your teeth as soon as you get up.
- If you always smoke after a meal get up straight away and do the washing up. This will take your mind off cigarettes. Also choose a different seat to your normal one, so that your brain does not automatically associate your position with your normal smoking habits.
- go for a walk.
- try to avoid social occasions where friends and family might smoke, encouraging you to join them. It is very difficult to say no, particularly if drinking alcohol at the same time.
- join a gym or exercise class which not only helps you to get fit but also stops you from becoming bored.
- take up a new hobby which you might not have had the money to do before you stopped.
- save up for that car or holiday you have always dreamed of. Working out exactly how much you have spent on cigarettes over a year might encourage you to stop.

The day you stop

How should I plan my day?

Try and do things you know will not tempt you to have a cigarette.

Remember from today you are no longer a smoker trying to give up.

Tell yourself you are a non-smoker.

Work through the day without a cigarette and take each day at a time. Plan a treat for the end of the day to reward yourself for not smoking. Have something special to eat, or go to the cinema; somewhere you will be less likely to smoke.

Staying stopped

Is it worth the effort?

Once the first day is over you have to make sure you stay stopped for good. Not even one puff of a cigarette, as that will tempt you to continue. If people offer you a cigarette or tobacco tell them why you have stopped smoking and why it is so important.

How to stop smoking and start living

How can I relax?

If you smoked to help you relax you will need to find other ways to do this. Enjoying a new hobby, making time for a long soak in the bath, spending time with non-smoking friends are just some examples to consider.

Will I notice a difference?

As a non-smoker your food will taste so much better and you will really start to enjoy your meals. Quite often worrying about putting on weight is a major reason for not trying to stop smoking. This can be avoided if you eat extra fruit and vegetables in your diet and do not replace your cigarettes with sweet and savoury snacks, such as chocolate and crisps.

Can I have the odd cigarette?

The easiest way to stay stopped is to never smoke again. The odd one here and there will lead to another and another. If you do start again, treat it as a stumble and start to stop again as soon as possible. Remember what caused you to start again and avoid where possible.

Congratulate yourself on what you have achieved so far.

Remember, it really is worth staying stopped. Remind yourself of the benefits to yourself and your family by not smoking.

Contact numbers

Specialist Stop Smoking Service (incorporating Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton and Hartlepool)

telephone: 01642 383819

Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm

or via the website at www.smokefreelifecountydurham.co.uk

County Durham Stop Smoking Service

Smokefreelifecountydurham

telephone: 0191 369 2016 or 0800 772 0565

or via the website at www.smokefreelifecountydurham.co.uk

NHS Smokefree

telephone helpline: 0300 123 1044

Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 8.00pm

Saturday – Sunday, 11.00am – 4.00pm

or via the website at www.smokefree.nhs.uk

How to stop smoking and start living

This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk

Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we're doing well or if there's anything which we can improve, that's why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

telephone: 01642 624719

Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 4.00 pm

Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

freephone: 0800 092 0084

Mobile: (can use text): 0779 506 1883

Email: patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

telephone: 01642 617617

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm. The office is based at the University Hospital of North Tees. It is near the lifts in the main tower block.

Data Protection and use of patient information

The Trust has developed a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Information Governance Team.

telephone: 01642 833551 or email: information.governance@nth.nhs.uk

University Hospital of North Tees, Hardwick, Stockton-on-Tees. TS19 8PE
University Hospital of Hartlepool, Holdforth Road, Hartlepool. TS24 9AH

Telephone: 01642 617617

Fax: 01642 624089