

Health Tip: Quitting Smoking Has Immediate Benefits

Within hours, health improves

(*HealthDay News*) - Chronic smokers die on average 7-14 years earlier than those who do not smoke regularly – **quitting smoking** will recover some of those years. Indeed, most people know that in the long term, quitting smoking offers enormous health benefits. But within weeks -- and even hours -- after quitting smoking, your body has already shown health improvements. The Canadian non-profit organization *Tobacco Facts* lists some of the immediate health benefits when you quit smoking:

- **Within eight hours**, the level of carbon monoxide in the body drops, while oxygen levels rise to normal.
- **After two days**, taste and smell is enhanced, and the risk of heart attack decreases.
- Breathing becomes easier **within three or four days**, because of increased lung capacity.
- **After two weeks**, no nicotine is left in the body, and blood flow is improved.
- **Within three months**, circulation and lung function are improved, and physical activity is significantly easier.
- **Within nine months**, coughing, congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath are significantly reduced.

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FIVE TIPS FOR QUITTING SMOKING

1. Don't smoke any number or any kind of cigarette. Smoking even a few cigarettes a day can hurt your health. If you try to smoke fewer cigarettes, but do not stop completely, soon you'll be smoking the same amount again. Smoking "low-tar, low-nicotine" cigarettes usually does little good, either. Because nicotine is so addictive, switching to lower-nicotine brands you'll likely just puff harder, longer, and more often on each cigarette. The only safe choice is to quit completely.

2. Write down why you want to quit. Do you want to—

- Feel in control of you life?
- Have better health?
- Set a good example for your children?
- Protect your family from breathing other people's smoke?

Really wanting to quit smoking is very important to how much success you will have in quitting. Smokers who live after a heart attack are the most likely to quit for good—they're very motivated. Find a reason for quitting before you have no choice.

3. Know that it will take effort to quit smoking. Nicotine is habit forming. Half of the battle in quitting is knowing you need to quit. This knowledge will help you be more able to deal with the symptoms of withdrawal that can occur, such as bad moods and really wanting to smoke. There are many ways smokers quit, including using nicotine replacement products (gum and patches), but there is no easy way. Take quitting one day at a time, even one minute at a time—whatever you need to succeed.

4. Half of all adult smokers have quit, so you can, too. That's the good news. There are millions of people alive today who have learned to face life without a cigarette. For staying healthy, quitting smoking is the best step you can take.

5. Get help if you need it. Many groups offer written materials, programs, and advice to help smokers quit for good. Your doctor or dentist is also a good source of help and support. See a list of National Groups with information and resources on how to quit.

TOBACCO CESSATION RESOURCES

ILLINOIS HELPLINES & RESOURCES TO QUIT SMOKING



Where Quitters Always Win!

Call toll-free: 1-866-QUIT-YES (1-866-784-8937)

OR Call Local Amer. Lung Assn. @ 1-815-962-6412

OR

American Cancer Society

Smoking Cessation Hotline

1-800-227-2345

LOCAL QUIT RESOURCES



**Tobacco Coordinator
815-720-4269**

**Rockford Memorial Hospital
Heart & Vascular Center
815-971-6100**

**Swedish American Hospital
Health Connect
815-968-2500**

**Crusader Clinic
815-490-1854**