

Benefits of Quitting Smoking

If you smoke, your body is constantly working to try and repair the damage done by regularly inhaling more than 4000 toxic chemicals. The best thing a smoker can do for their health is to quit smoking.

Benefits of quitting start immediately, with noticeable improvements in the first 72 hours.

Time since quitting	Health benefits
20 minutes	Heart rate drops.
12 hours	Blood levels of carbon monoxide drop dramatically.
72 hours	Sense of taste and smell improve.
2 weeks – 3 months	Lung function and circulation improves.
1 – 9 months	Coughing and shortness of breath decrease.
1 year	Risk of coronary heart disease is halved compared to continuing smokers.
5 years	Stroke risk is reduced to that of a non-smoker five to 15 years after quitting. Risk of cancers of the mouth, throat and oesophagus decreases.
10 years	Risk of lung cancer death is about half that of a continuing smoker and continues to decline. Risk of cancers of the bladder, kidney and pancreas decreases.
15 years	Risk of coronary heart disease and risk of death is the same as someone who has never smoked.

Benefits of quitting

So, why quit? There are so many good reasons to quit smoking.

The benefits include improvements to your health, your looks, your sense of taste and smell, your fitness and your finances. You will feel better about yourself and improve the health of family and friends around you.

Appearance and ageing

Smoking ages and wrinkles your skin. When you quit, your skin looks younger and healthier.

Quitting smoking means no more stains on your fingers and teeth and you will no longer smell of cigarette smoke. You won't only look better but you will feel better too because your body is healthier and your fitness level is improved. You'll also feel great because you have achieved something that is really hard to do for many people.

Your finances

Quit smoking and you will have extra money.

With prices averaging around \$15 for a packet of cigarettes, you could save around \$5,400 every year – that's an overseas holiday, money towards a car, house or a shopping spree. In the long-term, if you saved at this rate for five years you would save around \$27,000.

Based on spending \$15 per day on cigarettes, you can see the savings add up quickly.

Time since quitting	Money saved	What could you do with the money
2 days	\$30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buy a CD• Treat yourself and a friend to a movie
7 days	\$105	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enjoy a dinner for two• Buy a few DVDs
1 month	\$450	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take the kids to a theme park• Buy some new clothes
2 months	\$900	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buy a new television• Have a weekend away
6 months	\$2700	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buy an overseas airline ticket• Treat the family to a holiday
1 year	\$5400	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start redecorating your home• Pay a lump sum off your mortgage

Making the decision to quit

It is never too late to decide to quit smoking. The sooner you quit, the better your life expectancy. If you have tried to quit before and have not succeeded, consider seeking support and using pharmacotherapy.

How to quit

To improve your chance of quitting and staying stopped, it is a good idea to plan ahead. You may find these tips useful:

Get support:

Call Quitline 13 QUIT (13 7848) for free information, practical assistance and support. Quitline's trained counsellors are available seven days a week to help you get through the process of quitting.

Talk to your health professional:

Discuss quitting smoking with a general practitioner, pharmacist or community health worker, and plan your quitting strategy together.

Consider using pharmacotherapy:

Different products are available to help you quit smoking. Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) includes patches, gum, lozenges, sublingual tablets and inhalers. The aim of NRT products is to replace some of the nicotine from cigarettes without the harmful chemicals found in tobacco smoke, thus reducing withdrawal symptoms such as cravings and anxiety. Bupropion and Varenicline are non-nicotine medications that are also effective for helping smokers to quit.