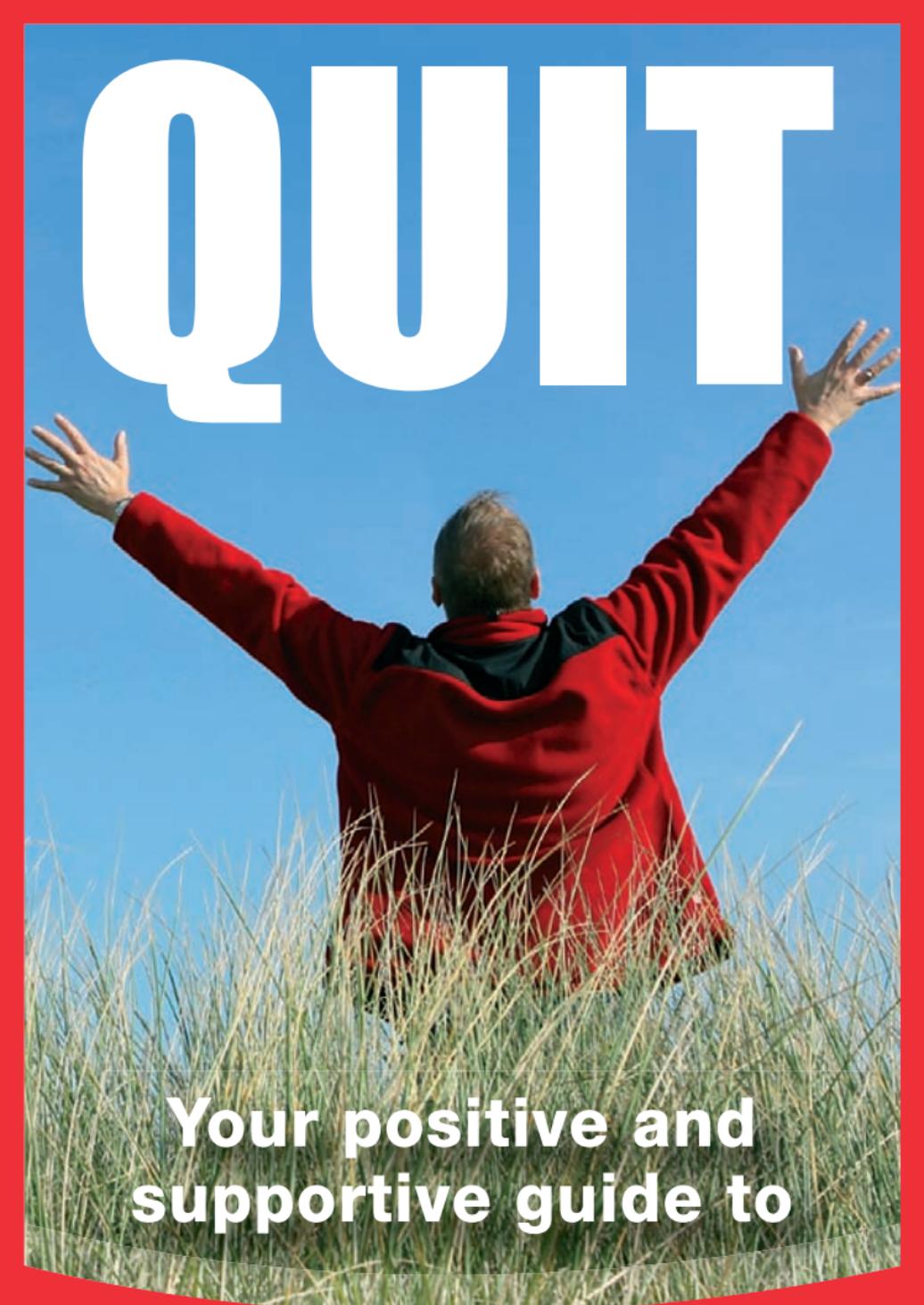


QUIT

A photograph of a person from behind, wearing a red jacket with black accents on the shoulders, standing in a field of tall, dry grass. Their arms are raised in a 'V' shape towards a clear blue sky. The person is wearing a ring on their left hand. The image is framed by a red border.

**Your positive and
supportive guide to**

Giving Up Smoking



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Introduction

- If you are a smoker, quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health.
- If you are one of the 7 in 10 smokers who want to stop, this booklet can help you to succeed.

The good things about quitting

Have a look at the benefits to you when you stop. Remember – it's never too late to stop.

When	What
Straight away	You will have fresher breath, hair and clothes – smoking is smelly!
Straight away	You will have more money in your pocket
Within 20 min	Your blood pressure and pulse rates begin to return to normal
Within 1 day	Risk of heart attack begins to fall
Within 2 days	You will have a better sense of taste and smell
Within 3 days	You will feel fitter as you will be less breathless
After 1 year	Your risk of sudden death from a heart attack is almost cut in half. Your risk from cancer is also reduced

10 tips to help you quit

- 1. Prepare to stop** – Weigh up the pros and cons. Write down your reasons for stopping and keep them close at hand.
- 2. Make a date to stop** – and stick to it.
- 3. Support** – Ask your family and friends for support.
- 4. Change your routine and plan ahead** – Replace or change activities that you usually associate with smoking.
- 5. Be active** – Regular activity is good for your health and helps you to manage stress.
- 6. Think positive** – You may have withdrawal symptoms once you stop smoking. These are a positive sign that your body is recovering from the harmful effects of smoking. They will disappear once your body gets used to the change.
- 7. Learn to deal with cravings** – Check out the tips for dealing with cravings (see page 9).
- 8. Save money** – that you would otherwise spend on tobacco.
- 9. Watch what you eat** – If you are worried about putting on weight, be careful about what you eat.
- 10. Take one day at a time** – Remember, every day without smoking is good news for your health, your family and your pocket. If you slip-up, all is not lost. Set a new date and start again.

Some smoking facts

- Tobacco smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, including tar, which can cause cancer.
- Smoking can take 10-15 years off your potential life span.
- Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease and increases your risk of stroke.
- Smoking stains your teeth and fingers and is bad for your skin. It also makes your breath smell.

3 positive steps to giving up

- **Step 1**
Getting ready to stop
- **Step 2**
Stopping
- **Step 3**
Staying Stopped

Step 1:

Getting ready to stop

Weigh up the pros and cons

Wanting to stop is the key to quitting smoking. Once you have decided you want to stop, make a date to stop and stick to it.

Be prepared: It may help to write down what you enjoy about smoking and compare this with why you want to stop. Make a list! Keep this close at hand to remind you why you're quitting.

What I enjoy about smoking

example: "It helps me to relax"

Why I want to stop smoking

example: "I worry about the damage to my health"

**Every cigarette is doing
you damage.**

**The sooner you give up the
better for you and your health.**

Are you ready to stop?

Think carefully about why you're still smoking. Look at the list below – are any of these you?

➤ **I haven't got the willpower**

Willpower just means wanting something badly enough. Ask yourself if you really want to stop and if so... go for it!

➤ **I'm worried about withdrawal symptoms**

Withdrawal symptoms are a positive sign that your body is recovering from the harmful effects of smoking.

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) can help (see page 14).

➤ **Smoking helps me cope with stress**

Work off stress with exercise, talk to a friend or take up a hobby.

➤ **It's too late – the damage is probably done**

It's never too late to quit. Once you stop, the benefits start from day one. After a year, you have cut your risk of heart attack by half.

➤ **This isn't the right time**

You might think that there will never be a right time. Think positive.

Your smoking diary

It helps to think about your smoking pattern – the places or situations in which you smoke most. Use the grid below to help you.

Number of cigarettes you smoke

Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Total
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				

Where do you smoke most?

Example: after a meal, watching TV

Day	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

Step 2:

Stopping smoking

Pick a day to stop smoking. Change your daily routine at the start to avoid situations where you will be tempted to smoke.

Try some of these ideas:

- If you enjoy a cigarette after a meal, chew some sugar-free gum instead of lighting up.
- If you're used to having a cigarette in your hands, for example while chatting on the telephone, find something else to hold, such as a pencil or stress balls.
- Be careful when drinking alcohol – a few drinks can make you forget you've quit smoking.
- Try drinking juice or water or eating fruit when you feel like having a cigarette. This will freshen your mouth and help lower your craving. Each craving only lasts 3-5 minutes and they will pass.
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can help double your chances of quitting (see page 14).

Dealing with cravings – the 4 Ds

- **Delay** at least 3-5 minutes and the urge will pass.
- **Drink** a glass of water or fruit juice.
- **Distract** yourself. Move away from the situation.
- **Deep** breaths. Breathe slowly and deeply.

Withdrawal symptoms

Not everyone gets withdrawal symptoms when they quit smoking. Withdrawal symptoms are positive signs that your body is recovering from the harmful effects of smoking. They will begin to fade as you get used to not smoking. The following symptoms are all normal:

- A great desire or craving for a cigarette
- Feeling extra sensitive or tense
- Feeling extra hungry
- Coughing more and bringing up mucus
- Tingling sensations in toes or fingers
- Dizziness or being light-headed
- Lack of concentration
- Change in sleep patterns.

Are you worried about putting on weight?

Eat well and be active

As well as helping you manage your weight, eating well and being active will help you feel good, relieve stress and keep your body in good working order. Being active will also help distract you from thinking about food and cigarettes.

Tips to help you eat well

- Plan ahead – don't go hungry. Eat three meals everyday. Try not to skip meals, especially breakfast.
- Only snack if you are hungry and choose your snacks carefully. Healthy snacks include fresh fruit, raw vegetables (celery, carrot sticks, slices of cucumber or peppers), natural yoghurt with fruit, plain popcorn.
- Go for low fat – avoid fried and high fat foods such as chips, crisps, nuts, chocolate, cakes and biscuits. Trim the fat off meat before cooking. Processed foods such as sausages and puddings are also high in fat. Watch your portion size.
- Watch what you drink. A soft drink can take the edge off your appetite and help

you get over a craving. Low calorie drinks include water, tomato juice, sugar free squashes, herbal or fruit teas, low fat or skimmed milk. High sugar fizzy drinks and alcohol add calories and can also make you want to snack.

Tips to help you be more active

- If you are not regularly active, start slowly with 10-15 minutes of physical activity three or four times a week. Gradually build up to 30 minutes a day, most days of the week. Remember, two or three short sessions can meet your goal of 30 minutes a day.
- Exercise at a pace that suits you. You should sweat slightly and be able to carry on a conversation when exercising (moderate intensity).
- Choose an activity that you enjoy – this will help you to keep it up. Go for a walk with a friend, swim, cycle or join a dance class or other activity.
- Build physical activity into your daily routine. Walk to work or the shops, use the stairs instead of the lift.

If you have any medical problems or concerns, check with your doctor before you start a new activity.

Step 3:

Staying stopped

Tips for staying stopped

Do:

- **Stay positive.** When you feel tired and tempted to give in, remember how far you've come and why you stopped. Stay determined and the temptation will pass.
- **Keep busy.** Boredom can make smoking seem more important to you than it really is.
- **Be active.** A short walk will give you energy and help to take your mind off cigarettes.
- **Save your money and reward yourself.** Take a trip to the cinema, buy yourself a book, a CD or a new outfit.
- **Be careful when drinking alcohol.** It can affect your willpower.

Don't:

- **Don't think 'one cigarette won't hurt'.**
This is just an excuse to have a cigarette and will lead to more. Don't give in.
- **Don't be tempted to smoke with friends who smoke.**

Many smokers slip-up before they stop for good. Think about the reasons you wanted to stop in the first place and get ready to stop again. Remember, you are not alone, you have support. You can do it!

Support from family and friends

You may want to stop smoking but you cannot force others to quit. That's a decision they have to make for themselves. However, you should look for support from family and friends when stopping.

How family and friends can help:

- Be positive and encouraging. Nagging is not helpful or supportive.
- Encourage other smokers not to smoke around you. Agree on smoke-free spaces and replace smoking with other activities such as walking, dancing or going to classes.

- Be supportive before, during and after you stop. This will help you to succeed in the long-term.
- Let you know about programmes and methods that are available to help you quit.
- Praise and reward you for your efforts. Smoking is addictive which means it's difficult to stop. If you are finding it hard going, you can get help (see back page).

Nicotine Replacement Therapy

Nicotine replacement therapies (NRTs) can double your chance of success by helping you to beat the craving for a cigarette. NRT is not a magic cure – it works with your willpower and will help reduce withdrawal symptoms and cravings.

There is a wide range of nicotine replacement therapy products available on prescription and over the counter from your pharmacist. There are other medications available on prescription to help you quit smoking. Ask your family doctor (GP) for information.

NRT options

- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum
- Nicotine Lozenges
- Nicotine Inhaler
- Nicotine Tablets

NRT and medications to help you quit are free to medical card holders when prescribed by your GP.

Remember: Always read the instructions for nicotine replacement therapies and use as directed.

Your pharmacist, GP or local Smoking Cessation Officer can advise you about which one is best for you. NRTs work best over a three month period so try to stick to this to get the most benefit and the right result – to quit smoking for good!

Need more advice?

If you'd like more advice or support, you can call the

National Smokers' Quitline on **CallSave 1850 201 203**

If you would like more personal support, the Quitline can put you in touch with the Smoking Cessation Officer in your area.

You can also **talk to your GP** or **pharmacist** or visit **www.healthpromotion.ie**

The National Smokers' Quitline is an initiative of the Health Service Executive, in partnership with the Irish Cancer Society.

Burn the ear off us

Call the
National
Smokers'
Quitline
1850 201 203



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