Congratulations.

You’re considering quitting smoking, and that’s a great first step. The Plan-to-Quit Cards can help guide you. These cards are designed to give you the information you need to know while preparing for your quit and for the early part of your quit. But they don’t take the place of a plan that includes treatment and support. So be sure to talk to your doctor about a smoking cessation treatment option that’s right for you. And help set yourself up for success by getting support.

Why it’s hard to quit.

For most people, quitting is a physical and behavioral challenge. For many people, smoking is an addiction. Plus, over the years, people develop smoking routines. Most people try to quit 6-9 times in their lifetime. So if you’ve tried to quit before, don’t be discouraged. It’s still possible to quit. So be confident, you’re going to do great.

Why nicotine is addictive.

1. When you smoke, nicotine goes from a cigarette into the brain in about 10 to 20 seconds.
   - Represents nicotine from smoking

2. Nicotine attaches to nicotine receptors in the brain, and that sends a message to release a chemical called dopamine.

3. Dopamine provides a feeling of pleasure. But it doesn’t last long. That’s why you want another cigarette. Nicotine addiction can be a cycle that can be very difficult to break.
   - Represents dopamine
How to use the Plan-to-Quit Cards.

These quick yet powerful activities are designed to help jump-start your quit and keep you on track during your first week of not smoking. After printing your set of cards, you can fold them in half to create a front and back. Read both sides, and do all of the activities. Do them at your own pace. And in order from before your Quit Date to after your Quit Date. Take a single activity with you if you need it. Once you’ve filled them out, you can review them anytime to remind yourself of your commitment to quit.

Before Your Quit Date
Use these Plan-to-Quit Cards to prepare yourself for your Quit Date.

On Your Quit Date and Beyond
Use these Plan-to-Quit Cards on and after your Quit Date.

It’s your quit.

No one can force you to do it. And everyone has their own reasons for quitting. So make it personal. Take an active role in your quit by completing these cards. That way you can start to develop a plan that works just for you and your life.
Getting Past Urges.

Consider this:
How long does an urge last?
An urge to smoke may last only 5 minutes. If you can get through 5 minutes after you feel the urge, the worst is probably over.

If you have an urge, try to find everyday objects to distract you. Here are some suggestions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The ordinary object</th>
<th>How to distract yourself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your cell phone</td>
<td>Update the numbers programmed into your cell phone. Or just call a friend for a quick 5-minute chat. Or why not play a quick game if you have one on your phone?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your wallet</td>
<td>Clean out your wallet. See if you have any receipts or business cards that you don’t need anymore, or that you can keep in some other place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your sneakers</td>
<td>A brisk walk or a little light exercise might help you stop thinking about smoking. Please be sure to consult your doctor before taking on a new physical activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### An orange and a glass of water

You might enjoy a glass of water if you squeeze a lemon, lime, or orange into it. There’s something refreshing about that citrus taste. And it might make a cigarette less appealing.

### A letter

Write a good old-fashioned letter to somebody who’s important to you. It can help keep you occupied until that urge is gone.

### Your desk

Take a look at your desk. Organize the drawers. Clean your desktop. Throw away pens that don’t work. Cleaning up your clutter can be distracting and productive.

### A computer

If it’s allowed where you work, play a computer game. Many computers have simple games like solitaire. Playing a hand or 2 could help get you past that immediate urge.

Can you think of any other 5-minute distractions? Write them down here:

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Create an Emergency Kit.

Make an Emergency Kit you can turn to if you have an urge to smoke. It can help you substitute healthier habits for cigarettes.

Here’s how:
First, get a container that’s at least big enough for a bottle of water. Maybe a plastic food container, quart size. Anything will do. You might even want to make more than 1 Emergency Kit. Flip this card over for a few ideas that might help distract you the next time you feel the urge to smoke.

In your backpack or purse: That way you can be prepared when you’re on the go.

Some places to store your Emergency Kit

In your refrigerator: Then you’ll have something else to reach for when you’re having an urge at home.

In your briefcase or a drawer at work: Instead of taking a smoke break, use your kit.
Some things to pack in your Emergency Kit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A small water bottle that you can refill.</td>
<td>We recommend that you drink plenty of water in the first few weeks after quitting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A pack of sugarless gum.</td>
<td>It can help keep your mouth active and breath fresh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A photocopy or picture of your inspiration for quitting.</td>
<td>You could even just include somebody’s name. Something to remind you why quitting smoking is important to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A small pack of toothpicks or coffee stirrers.</td>
<td>Licorice or cinnamon sticks would work, too. You can find any of these at many grocery stores. They’re just there to chew on, to keep your mouth occupied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some healthy snacks in a small bag.</td>
<td>Carrot sticks, celery, or crackers are good choices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Add Up Your Successes!

Remember, anytime you get past an urge to smoke, count that as a success. That’s something you can be really proud of. You can do this exercise at the end of your first week of not smoking. That way you can see how much money and time you could be saving by not buying and smoking cigarettes.

Calculate Your Money Saved
by not buying cigarettes this week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of packs you would have smoked this week</th>
<th>Cost per pack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \text{Amount of money saved this week} = \text{Number of packs you would have smoked this week} \times \text{Cost per pack} \]

How will you use the money you save by not buying cigarettes?
Calculate Your Time Saved
by not smoking cigarettes this week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of cigarettes you would have smoked today:</th>
<th>× 5 minutes</th>
<th>× 7 days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

= Number of minutes saved this week

*Based on the average time it takes to smoke a cigarette.

How will you use the time you save by not smoking cigarettes?

__________________________
__________________________
Step Away from the Scales.

For many, weight gain is a common concern when quitting. But in this early stage of your quit, it’s important to focus on the health benefits of quitting smoking, not your weight.

Give Yourself a Break.

Try looking at the bigger picture. You’re kicking one of the toughest addictions there is. You have to stay focused on that goal. And many people eventually start to lose the weight they may have gained as they adjust to being a nonsmoker.

The skinny on weight gain.

According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), many smokers do gain some weight when they quit. The weight gain is on average 6-12 pounds. The US Surgeon General believes that the health benefits of quitting smoking are far greater than any risks from the small weight gain. So stick to your quit. When you’re feeling confident about being a nonsmoker, then you can deal with any weight gain you may have.
Focus on Ways to Stay Healthy.

Your goal right now is to quit smoking. So try not to start any strict diets at this time. Stressing about your weight can make it harder to quit.

For now:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Try to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables (for example, blueberries are great, plus they’re full of antioxidants)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Try to limit your fat intake (for example, choose low-fat pretzel sticks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be sure to drink plenty of water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Get enough sleep (6-8 hours a day is recommended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Get regular physical activity (walking can help reduce stress, burn calories, and tone muscles). Please be sure to consult your doctor before taking on a new physical activity.</td>
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