

Help for Cravings and Tough Situations

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What to Do Right Now and to Create a Smoke-free Future

- For the first few days after you quit, spend as much free time as possible in places where smoking is prohibited - libraries, museums, theaters, churches.
- Drink a lot of water and fruit juice.
- Don't drink alcohol, coffee, and other beverages that you associate with smoking.
- Strike up a conversation instead of a match for a cigarette.
- If you miss the feeling of having a cigarette in your hand, play with something else - a pencil, a paperclip, a marble.
- If you miss the feeling of having something in your mouth, try toothpicks, cinnamon sticks or celery.
- AVOID TEMPTATION by staying away from situations you associate with pleasurable smoking.
- FIND NEW HABITS and create a non-smoking environment around you.
- Anticipate future situations/crises that might make you want to smoke again, and remind yourself of your reasons to not give in.
- Take deep rhythmic breaths similar to smoking to relax.
- Remember your goal and the fact that the urge will eventually pass.
- Think positive thoughts and avoid negative ones.
- Brush your teeth.
- Do brief bursts of exercise (isometrics, pushups, deep knee bends, walk up a flight of stairs, or touch your toes).
- Call a supportive friend.
- Eat several small meals. This maintains constant blood sugar levels and helps prevent the urge to smoke. Avoid sugary or spicy foods that trigger a desire for cigarettes.
- Above all, reward yourself. Plan to do something fun for doing your best.

Also in this area

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- ▶ [Guide to Quitting Smoking](#)
- ▶ [Quitting Spit \(Smokeless\) Tobacco](#)
- ▶ [Quiz: What's the Best Way for You to Quit?](#)
- ▶ [Find a Quitline or Other Support](#)
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When You Get the "Crazies"

- Keep oral substitutes handy: carrots, pickles, apples, celery, raisins, gum.
- Take 10 deep breaths, hold the last one while lighting a match. Exhale slowly and blow out the match. Pretend it is a cigarette and put it out in an ashtray.
- Take a shower or bath if possible.
- Learn to relax quickly and deeply. Make yourself limp, visualize a soothing, pleasing situation, and get away from it all for a moment. Concentrate on that peaceful image and nothing else.

- Light incense or a candle, instead of a cigarette.
- Tell yourself "no." Say it out loud. Practice doing this a few times, and listen to yourself. Some other things you can say to yourself might be, "I'm too strong to give in to smoking," "I'm a nonsmoker now," or "I don't want to let my friends and family down."
- Never allow yourself to think that "one won't hurt," because it will.

References

ACS Great American Smokeout - Promotion Guide, Nov. 16, 1989.

Revised: 11/-14-03