



**If you reproduce this article, kindly provide attribution to the Health Promotion and Wellness Department of the Navy & Marine Corps Public Health Center.*

Tobacco-Free Holidays—Techniques to Support Tobacco Cessation

The holidays are often a time of family, friends and celebration, which also means shopping, parties, and resolutions. So it's no surprise that the holiday season can also be a time of stress, making it difficult to quit tobacco or to stay tobacco-free.

Try these tips for navigating stress and staying tobacco-free during the holidays.

- Make a list of stress-relievers and keep it close-by for when you're feeling overwhelmed by holiday activities. If you need to relax, try using one of your favorite stress busters, or try exercising, doing a puzzle, or listening to music instead of taking a tobacco break.
- After eating may be a time you want to reach for a cigarette. Keep sugar-free gum or mints in your pocket to avoid reaching for tobacco, talk with someone, or get up and go for a walk.
- If you find that drinking alcohol makes you want to smoke or use smokeless tobacco, consider switching to another adult beverage or cutting back on alcoholic beverages while you're quitting. Instead, fill your glass with sparkling cider for the midnight toast.
- Let your family and friends know that you have quit or are in the process of quitting. If any of them use tobacco, ask them to do so outside or in a separate area, and request they refrain from inviting you to join.
- Keep a jar in your house and fill it up with the money you aren't spending on tobacco. Pretty soon you'll have enough to buy a holiday gift for a loved one (or yourself). Use a clear container so you can see your savings adding up.

During this hectic time of year it can be hard to stay focused on your tobacco free living goal. Stay motivated by reminding yourself of your reasons why you want to quit. Whether it's for your health, a New Year's resolution or a way to increase your holiday gift budget, keeping your reasons top of mind can help you stay on track.

For additional resources and information, visit

http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/Healthy_Living/Tobacco_Cessation/Tobacco_PersonalHealth.aspx
or <http://www.smokefree.gov/>