

# QUITTING SMOKING CAN BE DIFFICULT TO DO ON YOUR OWN

Fortunately, your pharmacist  
is always there to help you try  
something different.



*Quit after 43 years*



*Quit after 35 years*



*Quit after 22 years*



*Quit after 22 years*

[www.Quitwithhelp.ie](http://www.Quitwithhelp.ie)



# TALKING TO YOUR PHARMACIST CAN HELP YOU QUIT SUCCESSFULLY

## BREAKING A SMOKING HABIT CAN BE VERY DIFFICULT

Smoking addiction can be hard to beat: not only the addiction to nicotine, but also the act of smoking – its routines and rituals. In order to quit successfully, you will need to overcome both sides of your smoking habit.<sup>1</sup>

## UNDERSTANDING NICOTINE WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Nicotine withdrawal symptoms can last up to ten weeks or more:<sup>2</sup>

Common nicotine withdrawal symptoms	Typical duration
Increased appetite	>10 weeks
Urge to smoke	>10 weeks
Depression	<4 weeks
Restlessness	<4 weeks
Poor concentration	<2 weeks
Irritability/ aggression	<4 weeks
Mouth ulcers	>4weeks
Night-time awakenings	<1 week

## DON'T LET PAST FAILURES PUT YOU OFF

Most people make 5–7 attempts before they finally succeed.<sup>3</sup> It's also normal to worry about putting on weight, coping with stress, handling peer pressure or social situations and coping with nicotine withdrawal symptoms. And if you slip up, don't assume it will lead you back to full-time smoking:

- **Remember, every craving only lasts a few minutes** – you can fight it off!
- **Remind yourself how far you've come** – do you really want to start all over again?
- **Remember your reasons for quitting** – if you've made a list, read it to yourself whenever you feel the urge to smoke

97% of people who try to stop smoking without help don't make it.<sup>4</sup>

[www.Quitwithhelp.ie](http://www.Quitwithhelp.ie)

## YOUR PHARMACIST CAN BRING A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO HELPING YOU QUIT

- Can work with you to come up with a personalised quitting strategy
- Can recommend a smoking cessation product that's right for you
- Discusses concerns and worries you might have e.g. weight gain
- Directs you toward extra support, if you need it, with online programs such as LifeRewards

## YOUR PHARMACIST CAN ALSO PROVIDE HANDY TIPS TO HELP YOU SUCCEED

- **Take one day at a time** – focus on getting through each day without smoking and be kind to your body as it adjusts to the new you.
- **Go easy on caffeine** – without nicotine in your body, your body will retain much more caffeine (stimulant found in coffee, cola and even chocolate) than it did before, which could make you feel restless, irritable and sleepless
- **Be aware of alcohol** – research has shown that drinking can weaken your resolve to quit, so plan social occasions carefully, especially in the early days
- **Keep your hands busy** – keys, beads, a stress ball, mobile phone or jewellery can be a great substitute for restless hands
- **Keep a list of reasons for quitting** – remind yourself regularly why you want to quit
- **Reward yourself** – use the money you've saved to treat yourself occasionally for beating the urge to smoke

### Tips:

- Avoid smoking venues
- Prepare yourself to turn down offers of cigarettes
- Take a non-smoking friend with you
- Cut down on the amount of alcohol you drink, or avoid it altogether
- Remember, it's okay to go home early if cravings get too strong

Quitting is hard. But talking to your pharmacist improves your chance of success.<sup>4</sup>

[www.Quitwithhelp.ie](http://www.Quitwithhelp.ie)

## IT'S IMPORTANT TO START THE CONVERSATION WITH YOUR PHARMACIST, RIGHT AWAY

Every cigarette you smoke puts your health at serious risk. Medical studies show that smoking not only causes lung cancer, it contributes to many other health problems including breathlessness, heart disease and other cancers.<sup>5-8</sup>

## GOOD NEWS: THE MOMENT YOU GIVE UP SMOKING, YOUR HEALTH STARTS TO IMPROVE.<sup>8-9</sup>

Immediately	Breath smells fresher, your taste and sense of smell return.
20 minutes after quitting	Heart rate and blood pressure drop
12 hours after quitting	Blood's carbon monoxide level returns to normal
72 hours after quitting	Body is now 100% nicotine-free. Lung capacity starts to increase
10 days after quitting	Your body has started to adjust to functioning without nicotine
4 weeks after quitting	Breathlessness and coughing start to decrease
12 weeks after quitting	Cilia in lungs have recovered to efficiently clean lungs and airways
1 year after quitting	Risk of dying from coronary heart disease is half of that of a smoker
5 years after quitting	Risk of cancer of mouth, throat and oesophagus is half that of a smoker
10 years after smoking	Lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker's. Your risk of a range of cancers decreases.
15 years after quitting	Your risk of coronary heart disease returns to that of a non-smoker.

In addition:

- People who stop smoking before the age of 35 avoid 90% of the health risks attributable to tobacco<sup>10</sup>
- On average, smokers who stop before their 50th birthday halve their risk of dying in the next 15 years, compared to those who continue<sup>11</sup>
- Women who were aged 65 when they gave up increased their life span by up to 4 years compared to those who carried on<sup>12</sup>

**If you're struggling to quit, don't delay - talk to your pharmacist and try something different.**