

Healthy Ohio tips

Maybe you've just quit smoking or chewing or you're in the process of quitting. Congratulations! You've taken an important step toward living each day healthier and having more time and money for yourself.

That doesn't mean that there aren't challenges ahead of you; one of the hardest parts of quitting for good is breaking the daily habits you've built up around tobacco use. After all, you can't start living like a nonsmoker until you start acting like one.

Tips like the ones below can serve as a "cheat sheet" to help you replace those old habits with new healthy ones. Be sure to ask your doctor, your friends and the quit specialists at the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line at 800-QUIT-NOW for even more suggestions.



Avoiding weight gain

- **Hungry?** People who use tobacco products of any kind generally have a less developed sense of taste than people who don't. After you stop smoking or chewing, foods you were bored with before will be noticeable- even delicious- again. With healthy choices, you'll enjoy food like you haven't in years. Keep satisfying, nutritious foods like grapes, orange sections, nuts or sunflower seeds around so that you aren't tempted to overindulge in choices that could cause you to gain weight.
- **Drink more water.** Some people enjoy their new sense of taste so much that they gain weight when they quit tobacco. Drinking water helps you to feel fuller between meals and gives you something to do with your hands. Keep bottle of water everywhere- in your car, at your desk, and in fridge- so that there's always one around.
- **Used to smoking a cigarette after a satisfying meal?** Instead of lighting up, keep sugarless hard candy or a bowl of fruit on the table-- just remember to brush your teeth! Start a new, healthy routine for yourself.
- **Keep gum or toothpicks around.** You'll have something to do with your hands and mouth instead of snacking.

Tobacco-free fitness

You don't have to train like a professional athlete to feel better about your body- by quitting smoking, you'll improve your lung capacity and circulation almost right away. Going for a walk improves these functions even more, and it's a small step toward living healthier that anyone can take.

- **Do you miss your smoke breaks?** Ask a nonsmoking co-worker to take a walk with you instead of sitting down for your one-on-one meeting. It gives you a chance to get outside, move your body, and get to know your co-workers. And you're still using less time than you did breaking for cigarettes.

- **If you stay home during the day**, try setting up a regular time to walk. Consider inviting a friend or neighbor. Many people simply miss the relaxed feeling they perceived to have while smoking a cigarette on the front porch. A quick walk and a burst of fresh air can do the same thing, starting you off in a healthy direction!

Staying tobacco-free

- **Get checked out.** Make an appointment with your doctor and dentist after you've quit. They will be happy to see you've made the decision, and they can tell you about the health improvements you're about to enjoy.
- **Spruce up your wheels.** If you used to smoke in your car to and from work, have your car cleaned, inside and out, once you've quit. Take all ashtrays and lighters, even the car lighter, out of the vehicle. If you used to roll your window down while you smoked, keep doing it! You'll enjoy the fresh air.
- **Breathe.** Former smokers often miss those deep, satisfying breaths you take when you're drawing on a cigarette. It sounds silly, but practicing some deep breathing fights tobacco cravings and leaves you feeling energized and healthy. Doing some simple stretches will help to encourage this breathing (be sure to talk with your doctor before you start any fitness routine).
- **Explore.** Pick out restaurants, museums, or concerts you may have not visited before because you couldn't go for hours without leaving to smoke. Explore your city! Trying some new experiences will help break your old routines and expose you to many other people living tobacco-free.
- **Write it down.** Don't forget the reasons you've quit smoking- whether it's for your family, your health, or your checkbook. Make a list and while you need it, keep it somewhere visible, like on the fridge. When you don't need it anymore, tuck it in your wallet or handbag as a reminder of how far you've come!

