

# *Tobacco Cessation:* An Abbreviated Mini-Workbook

*A Resource  
for Veterans*

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



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This mini-workbook is an abbreviated version of the Tobacco & Health Primary Care Tobacco Cessation program book “My Tobacco Cessation Workbook.” It is intended to be used by Veterans involved in telephone, telehealth, or secure message-based tobacco cessation programs. Veterans prescribed tobacco cessation medications should be given individual medication handouts as this mini-workbook does not contain in-depth medication information.

Download patient medication guides here: [www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking/quit/medications.asp](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking/quit/medications.asp)

## CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Congratulations on taking the first step to quitting tobacco products. Whether you smoke cigarettes, cigars, pipes or use chewing tobacco, VA's Primary Care Tobacco Cessation Program can help you quit. Smoking is the number one cause of preventable illness in the United States. Smoking increases your chance of having a heart attack and stroke and it can damage your lungs and in many cases, lead to emphysema. Smoking can also cause cancer of the lungs, bladder, kidney, and pancreas as well as cause cancer in the mouth and throat.

If you have tried to quit before and have not been successful, don't give up! Research has shown that it takes an average of 6-8 quit attempts for a smoker to quit for good. Think of tobacco dependence as a chronic disease like high blood pressure or high cholesterol...you will need to work at it to become a nontobacco user.

So what is the best way to quit tobacco? People ask this question all the time and there are multiple ways you can stop. The best way to stop tobacco is to use behavioral techniques to help you break the habit and develop new behaviors, along with medications to help you manage nicotine withdrawal symptoms. This mini-workbook, written specifically for Veterans, will assist you in changing your daily behaviors that up until now have resulted in your use of tobacco products.



## WHY DO I WANT TO QUIT TOBACCO?

The first step in quitting any addictive drug, including nicotine, is to determine why you want to quit.

Mark off the reasons you want to quit tobacco products:

- Breathe better
- Reduce my risk of cancer
- Reduce my risk of heart attack and stroke
- Improve circulation of blood to my legs and arms
- Reduce my risk of emphysema/chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Smell better
- Improve my sense of smell and taste
- Save money
- Set a good example for my children/grandchildren
- Have more control over my life

What are other reasons you want to quit? Write these reasons below:

## CHAPTER 2: Why Do I Use Tobacco?

### TOBACCO USE IS LINKED TO OTHER HABITS

Tobacco use is associated with several different behaviors that are very closely related. Tobacco use is a **learned behavior**, meaning you learned this from your family, friends, magazine ads, television, movies, or during your military service. When you were in the military, you may have heard someone say “Smoke ‘em if you got ‘em.” Who helped you learn your tobacco habit?

Think about how often you “puff” or “drag” on a cigarette in a day. If you smoke one pack of cigarettes a day and each cigarette takes 10 puffs, that’s 200 puffs a day. Over the course of 40 years, you would take approximately **three million** puffs!

Tobacco use is also a **triggered behavior**, meaning certain activities or times of day may make you think about having a cigarette or chewing tobacco.

Check off some of your triggers for using tobacco:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waking up in the morning | <input type="checkbox"/> Waking up during the night, having nightmares |
| <input type="checkbox"/> After meals              | <input type="checkbox"/> Stress  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> During breaks            | <input type="checkbox"/> Pain  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driving                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling anxious, angry or impatient           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking on the phone     | <input type="checkbox"/> Seeing someone else smoke                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working on the computer  | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling bored                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drinking coffee          | <input type="checkbox"/> Watching TV                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drinking alcohol         | <input type="checkbox"/> After completing a task                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> After sex                |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Before bedtime           |  |

Write down other triggers you may have:

## A CHALLENGE FOR YOU: ADDRESSING YOUR TRIGGERS

Try not smoking during one of your triggers. For example, you might pick after eating breakfast as the trigger. Starting tomorrow, try not smoking for 10 minutes after breakfast. Wait 20 minutes to smoke after breakfast the next day. Wait 30 minutes the day after that. Add another 10 minutes each day. By the end of the week you will be waiting one hour between the trigger and smoking. Once you have tackled one trigger, try adding another trigger until you have a few of them managed.

By adding time between the trigger and the action of using tobacco, the trigger becomes weaker. This will help when you get to your quit day. If you use chewing tobacco, you can do the same thing by looking at your triggers to put in a new dip. To help you avoid using tobacco, come up with a few things you can do rather than use tobacco.

Some examples would be:

- Going for a walk
- Using a substitute like chewing gum or candy
- Doing deep breathing exercises (see Appendix A)

A more complete list of substitute behaviors can be found under [DEADS Strategy](#) on p.15.

Write down 3 of your triggers and what you will do instead of using tobacco:

1. Trigger:

Instead of using tobacco, I will:

2. Trigger:

Instead of using tobacco, I will:

3. Trigger:

Instead of using tobacco, I will:

Lastly, tobacco use is also an [automatic behavior](#), meaning you may find you smoke without thinking about it. You may recall times when you lit a cigarette and then noticed you already had one lit.

There are a few ways to help reduce this automatic behavior:

**Tip #1 Move your tobacco to a different location**

- If you carry your cigarettes in your front pocket, put them on the kitchen counter. If you smoke outside, take one cigarette with you instead of the whole pack. You will need to physically walk to the pack to smoke the next cigarette. This leads you to think about smoking that cigarette and possibly consider whether you really need it or if you can wait longer to have the next one.
- If you use chewing tobacco, try placing the can on the kitchen counter or another location in the house, rather than in your pocket. You will need to walk to the location of the tobacco can before putting in a new plug of chew.

**Tip #2 Keep track of your cigarettes as you smoke them**

- Track your tobacco use on a sheet of paper you keep in your pocket or in your pack of cigarettes. Each time you smoke or dip, note on your tracker the time of day, your mood at that time (e.g., happy, bored, angry, etc.) and your level of need for tobacco (e.g., low, medium, high).
- Keeping track of the cigarettes helps you work on the automatic behavior of smoking. You can see if changes in your mood cause you to smoke more or less. Many people find that they smoke more when they are unhappy, while others might find they smoke more when they are bored. Times of celebration may be a situation when your tobacco use might increase. You may find that you smoke more when you are around certain friends who also smoke.
- If you use chewing tobacco, you can use the same method to track the number of dips you take in a day.



## CHAPTER 3: Nicotine Addiction

### WHAT IS NICOTINE?

Nicotine is a substance found naturally in tobacco that causes feelings of pleasure, relaxation or stimulation, and stress reduction. Nicotine is the addictive part of tobacco, but is not by itself harmful to your body. The other substances found in tobacco and substances formed when tobacco is burned harm your body. There are more than 7,000 chemicals in tobacco smoke and at least 69 that are harmful to humans and can cause cell damage, cell death and cancer. Some of the more harmful chemicals include the following:

- Carbon monoxide
- Lead
- Arsenic
- Hydrogen cyanide
- Cadmium
- Benzene
- Ammonia
- Polonium-210
- Formaldehyde

Even though it is not burned, smokeless tobacco also contains some of these harmful chemicals. Other products and devices that deliver nicotine, including the electronic cigarette, may also be harmful to you.

Some products with nicotine can help you quit using tobacco, like nicotine replacement therapy (nicotine patch, nicotine gum, and nicotine lozenges). It is important to only use nicotine products to quit that are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

### COPING WITH NICOTINE WITHDRAWAL

Nicotine is one of the most addictive substances on earth and this is why it is so hard to quit. You feel a need for a cigarette when the level of nicotine in your body starts to drop. If you go for long periods of time between cigarettes, such as sleeping through the night, you will have a strong craving to smoke.

You might feel the following effects when you are low on nicotine:

- Irritability, frustration, anger
- Difficulty sleeping
- Anxiety
- Increased appetite
- Difficulty concentrating
- Coughing
- Restlessness
- Runny nose
- Depressed mood
- Cravings/urges



Most of these symptoms start the first or second day you are off tobacco. They are at their worst in the first week and get better with time. Most symptoms disappear after 2-4 weeks, but the urge to smoke can stay with you for a long time. The urge to use tobacco will be stronger when you first quit and seem to last minutes. However, after the first 2-4 weeks, the urges will become shorter. For most people the urge lasts only seconds after they have been off tobacco for a month or longer. Nicotine withdrawal symptoms can be managed by certain medications and behavioral coping strategies.

**Table 1. Behavioral Strategies for Coping with Nicotine Withdrawal Symptoms**

Withdrawal Symptoms	What Can I Do About It?
Irritability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Avoid stress</li> <li>■ Practice relaxation techniques</li> <li>■ Exercise</li> </ul>
Depressed mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Do something fun</li> <li>■ Get support from family and friends</li> <li>■ Discuss with your medical provider</li> </ul>
Difficulty concentrating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Avoid stress</li> <li>■ Plan your work accordingly</li> </ul>
Dizziness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Get up slowly from sitting position</li> </ul>
Chest tightness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Practice relaxation techniques</li> </ul>
Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Get more sleep</li> <li>■ Take naps</li> <li>■ Don't push yourself</li> </ul>
Hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Drink lots of water</li> <li>■ Eat low-calorie snacks</li> </ul>
Stomach pain, constipation, gas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Drink fluids</li> <li>■ Eat fruits and vegetables</li> </ul>
Cough, dry throat, runny nose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Drink fluids</li> <li>■ Eat sugar-free candy</li> <li>■ Use cough drops</li> </ul>
Difficulty sleeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduce caffeine consumption (e.g., reduce daily intake by 50%)</li> </ul>

## HOW TOBACCO AFFECTS YOUR BODY

Tobacco can be harmful to almost every part of your body. Many of these problems can be completely or almost completely reversed if you stop tobacco. Here is a list of the most common problems of tobacco use going from your head to your toes:

### Head

- Stroke (blockage or breaking of a blood vessel in the brain)
- Mouth and throat cancers
- Cavities and loss of teeth
- Bad breath
- Decreased night vision
- Yellow staining of skin and teeth
- Nose congestion and infections
- Wrinkles

### Lungs

- Cancer (up to 85% of all lung cancers are from smoking)
- Emphysema and chronic bronchitis
- Worsening of asthma
- Lung infections

### Heart

- Congestive heart failure
- Heart attacks
- Increased blood pressure and heart rate

### Stomach/intestines

- Cancers
- Ulcers
- Heartburn



### Pancreas

- Cancer

### Circulation in arms, legs and feet

- Reduced circulation in arms, legs and feet that sometimes leads to amputations in severe cases

### Bones

- Increased bone thinning leading to a higher risk of broken bones

### Genitals/urinary system

- Cancers in kidneys, bladder and reproductive organs
- Erectile dysfunction in men
- Sexual dysfunction in women

## RECOVERY OF YOUR BODY AFTER STOPPING TOBACCO

After you quit using tobacco products, your body will start to heal and you will start seeing many improvements. It is never too late to quit. You will start seeing benefits the very first day you quit using tobacco and these benefits will increase the longer you remain tobacco free.

### 20 minutes after you quit

Reduction in your heart rate and blood pressure; the temperature of your hands and feet will start returning to normal.

### 12 hours after you quit

Carbon monoxide level in your blood drops.

### 24 hours after you quit

Anxiety and irritability may start due to withdrawal from nicotine. These symptoms get better the longer you are off tobacco.

### 2–3 days after you quit

Nerve endings in your body start to regenerate and you may notice a return in your taste and smell. Anger, anxiety and irritability from nicotine withdrawal may be at the worst level during this time. Nicotine replacement with nicotine gum or lozenges may help this. Breathing may be easier now.

### 1 week after you quit

Tobacco cravings and urges may be less frequent and shorter in duration.

### 2 weeks after you quit

Blood circulation in your gums and teeth are similar to a nonsmoker. You should no longer have anger, anxiety and irritability from nicotine withdrawal. Cravings and urges should be shorter and less frequent.

### 1–3 months after you quit

Your heart attack risk has started to drop and your lung function is improving. The blood circulation in your body has improved and walking might be easier. Give walking a try and see if you can go farther than when you were smoking. If you had a cough when you smoked, the cough should be gone now.

### 1–9 months after you quit

Smoking-related nasal congestion, fatigue, and shortness of breath should be improving. Cilia (little hairs in the lungs, throat and nose) have re-grown in your lungs and can clean your lungs to remove irritants and mucous, and reduce infections.

### 1 year after you quit

The risk of cardiovascular disease, heart attack, and stroke has dropped to less than half that of a smoker.

### 10–15 years after you quit

Your risk of having a stroke or heart attack has dropped to a similar rate as a nonsmoker.

Your risk of lung cancer is 30-50% less than a continuing smoker's risk. Your risk of death from lung cancer is one-half of the risk if you were an average smoker (one pack per day). Your risk of pancreatic cancer is similar to a person who has not smoked and your risk of mouth, throat, and esophageal cancer has reduced significantly.

Your risk of tooth loss has decreased to a rate similar to someone who has never smoked.

### 20 years after you quit (women)

Your risk of death from smoking-related causes, including cancer and lung disease, is the same as a person who never smoked.



***20 minutes to 20 years...  
Benefits of quitting smoking  
last a lifetime***

## CHAPTER 4: Medications To Help You Quit Tobacco

### TYPES OF TOBACCO CESSATION MEDICATIONS

There are many types of medications used to help people quit tobacco. Some of these medications provide nicotine to help you slowly reduce the nicotine level in your body when you quit tobacco. Medications that provide nicotine are called nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). NRT reduces your cravings for nicotine and helps reduce nicotine withdrawal symptoms. There are also two medicines, bupropion (Zyban®) and varenicline (Chantix®), which do not contain nicotine, but can help you have fewer nicotine cravings.

All medications are effective in increasing your chances of stopping tobacco for good. The medications listed below are available through VA. Contact your primary care provider or mental health provider if you are interested in using medications to help you quit tobacco.

1. Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)
  - Nicotine patch
  - Nicotine lozenge
  - Nicotine gum
2. Bupropion (Zyban®, Wellbutrin®)
3. Varenicline (Chantix®)

Some of these medications can be used together to help you stop tobacco. Many studies have shown that these combinations are effective and can work better than using one medication alone.

#### Combination therapy:

- |                                     |                                |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ■ Nicotine patch + Nicotine gum     | ■ Nicotine patch + Bupropion   |
| ■ Nicotine patch + Nicotine lozenge | ■ Nicotine gum + Bupropion     |
|                                     | ■ Nicotine lozenge + Bupropion |

Note: Varenicline is not used in combination with any other medication for quitting tobacco.

You may be wondering “What works best?” when it comes to quitting tobacco. At this time, it appears that combination therapy using the medications listed above along with behavioral strategies have the highest success rates. For most patients, the choice of medication will be based on your medical history, which you can discuss with your medical provider.

## CHAPTER 5: Getting Ready For Quit Day!

### SET YOUR QUIT DAY

As your quit day approaches, there are several things you might want to do to get ready.

First, write down your quit day...this date is very important!

### MY QUIT DAY

Month\_\_\_\_\_ Day\_\_\_\_\_ Year\_\_\_\_\_ Time\_\_\_\_\_

### PLANNING FOR QUIT DAY

Now get your home, car and workplace ready for quit day by following the tips below:

1. Plan out your tobacco usage so you will run out by your quit day. Make sure you remove all tobacco from your home. Look in jacket pockets, kitchen drawers, the freezer, your garage, or other frequent tobacco storage sites. Also check inside your car for any stashes of tobacco. Considering that the average craving for tobacco lasts 2-3 minutes, removing nearby tobacco products will keep you from being tempted. For most folks, the urge may pass before you can get in the car and go to a store to buy tobacco.
2. Remove all ashtrays and lighters. These can be triggers for tobacco use once you get to quit day. Since your plan is to quit, do you really still need them? Remove ashtrays and lighters in the car as well.
3. Clean up your smoking area. If you smoke in one room (e.g., porch, garage) or in the car, clean up these locations as they can be triggers for you to smoke. Remove cigarette butts, wash down furniture, and spray upholstery with an odor neutralizer to help remove the smoke smell. Getting your car cleaned or detailed may help. You may find you have trouble spending time in these areas for a while. That is ok, just take a break and come back when you have a few weeks of being tobacco free.

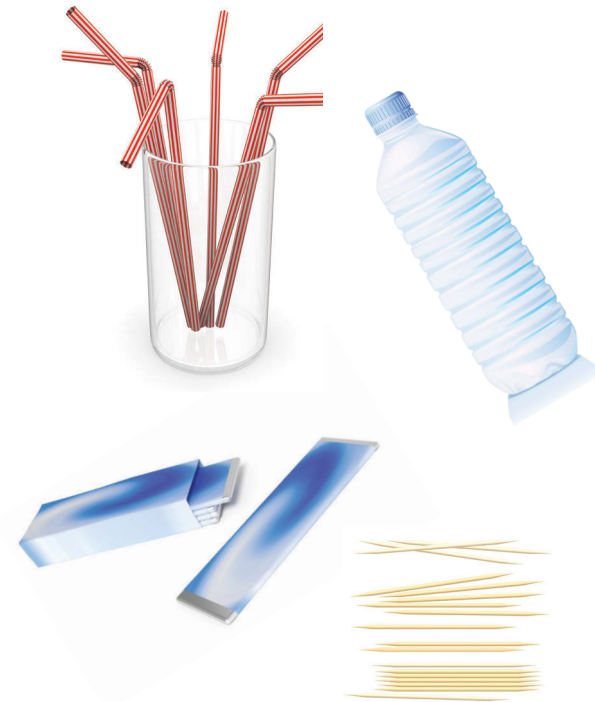


4. Go to the store and stock up on some tobacco substitutes. Sugar-free gum, sugar-free mints or candies, carrot and celery sticks or other vegetables, toothpicks, straws, and cinnamon sticks. These items can be helpful when you are having a craving.
5. Think about hobbies or other interests you have to fill up your day. Some hobbies and interests to consider would be puzzles, games, reading, exercise, fishing, woodworking, painting, drawing, and cooking. Make sure it is a hobby not associated with tobacco use.

When you are planning to quit, it is first good to look at your habits and patterns of using tobacco. Pick three times you use tobacco and write these down.

Write an activity you can do or a substitute you could use instead of using tobacco. For example, if you use tobacco after meals, brush your teeth instead of smoking. Examples of activities and substitutes are:

- Chewing sugar-free gum
- Using sugar-free candy
- Chewing on a straw or toothpick (don't swallow pieces of toothpick)
- Eating carrot sticks or celery sticks
- Drinking water
- Going for a walk
- Doing chair exercises
- Deep breathing
- Talking to a friend
- Reading a book
- Working on a crossword puzzle
- Playing computer games
- Brushing your teeth



1. I usually smoke when:

Instead of smoking at that time, I can:

2. I usually smoke when:

Instead of smoking at that time, I can:

3. I usually smoke when:

Instead of smoking at that time, I can:

## STRESS AND TOBACCO USE

Most Veterans who use tobacco say that stress is their biggest trigger. You may notice when you are under more stress you smoke more or inhale deeper. It is important to discover a way to handle stress without turning to tobacco. While you might feel more relaxed after using tobacco, nicotine is not a true relaxant. Nicotine is a stimulant and increases your heart rate and blood pressure very quickly after you use it. Because of this, the high level of nicotine from smoking a cigarette may cause you more physical stress. The feeling of relaxation you may experience when you use tobacco is usually from the nicotine treating the withdrawal symptoms you may have between cigarettes or chewing tobacco.

What situations cause you to experience stress? Write them down:

Here are some tips you can try to help you deal with stress without using tobacco. Try several of these before your quit day in order to see what works for you.

### Stress Reduction Tips:

- **Deep breathing:** Inhale deeply through your nose or mouth, hold the breath for four counts, and then slowly exhale the breath. Repeat this 4-5 times.
- **Go for a walk or a jog:** Walk or jog around the block, to the mailbox, or around your house. It does not matter how far you go, just get up and get moving!
- **Do chair exercises:** If you cannot walk, sit in your chair and get your arms moving.



You can do this with just your hands, or put a canned food (same weight) in each hand and do arm curls or arm lifts to the front and side.

- **Drink water:** Cold water can reduce a craving and also fill you up so you don't fill up on other foods. Water also helps remove tobacco's toxic substances from your body faster.
- **Take a break:** If a situation is causing you stress, take a break and go outside or to another room. If you are driving, pull over at a rest stop or parking lot and take a break. Try some deep breathing to feel better without using tobacco.
- **Listen to relaxing music:** Relaxing music can reduce your stress and improve your mood.

## CRAVINGS FOR TOBACCO: WHAT DO I DO?

Almost all people have tobacco cravings when they quit. You may even dream about smoking or chewing tobacco. This is normal and should not be thought of as a relapse. Remember, if you have cravings this does not mean you will not be able to quit for good. So what can you do about tobacco cravings? Try the **DEADS Strategy**:

### D-Delay

The most important thing to remember is that an urge will go away whether you smoke or not. Waiting out an urge, especially if you begin to do something else, is easier than you may expect. Believe it or not, the urge will fade after about 5-10 minutes, even if you don't smoke. It also helps if you have a positive attitude about the urge disappearing. Think "This won't last, the urge will go away" or "I would like a cigarette, but I am not going to have one, because I don't need one."

### E-Escape

Remove yourself from the situation or event that led to the urge. If you're in a room where others are smoking and an urge hits, get up and take a short walk. You can walk around the building or outside until you feel ready to re-enter the situation without smoking.

### A-Avoid

Avoid situations where you'll be tempted to smoke. This will be particularly important in the first days and weeks after you quit. For example, if you regularly go places where there's a lot of smoking, it's best to avoid them for a little while to allow you to get used to not smoking.

### D-Distract

Get busy and get back to what you were doing before the urge hit. There may be other things you enjoy doing that are incompatible with smoking. You can try working in the yard, reading a book or magazine, walking, taking a shower, or working on a crossword puzzle.

### S-Substitute

When you feel you want a cigarette, substitute something else for a cigarette. Try sugar-free candy or sugar-free gum, especially if you are watching your weight. You could also eat a piece of fruit or drink a glass of water. Chew on something like a straw or a toothpick. The trick is to come up with something you like that can be easily substituted for a cigarette.

### GET HELP FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Choosing to quit is a tough decision. You must do it for yourself, but you don't have to do it alone. Asking for help is a key part of the quitting process. Think about who can help you quit. Consider family members and other people with whom you spend a lot of time. Also consider getting support from former smokers who have successfully quit. Try calling a quitline or using a supportive text messaging service. There are also smartphone apps and quit information online. Don't be afraid to ask for help—you can:

- Tell everyone that you're quitting and your quit day
- Ask family, friends and roommates to smoke outside
- Ask a friend or spouse to quit with you
- Make a list of people who can give you support (fill in **Table 2. My Support People**)
- Call the VA national quitline: 1-855-QUIT VET (1-855-784-8838) to speak with a smoking cessation counselor and receive free telephone counseling
- Sign up to receive text message tips and support from SmokefreeVET to your cell phone. Text the word VET to 47848 or visit [www.smokefree.gov/VET](http://www.smokefree.gov/VET)
- Use an app on your smartphone - try VA's Stay Quit Coach: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/stay-quit-coach>
- Access online information: <http://smokefree.gov/veterans> [www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking)
- Join an online Veteran support community, 'Like' Smokefree VET on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/smokefreevet](http://www.facebook.com/smokefreevet)

Q: How can your support person help you?

- Listen when you want to talk
- Call to see how you are doing
- Offer to help you with chores, errands, childcare, shopping and other things
- Talk about problems and how to solve them

- Cheer you on

**Q:** How can you help your support person?

- Let them know what will help you
- Let them know when you will be quitting tobacco
- Set up a time to talk after quit day
- Plan fun activities that can keep you from thinking about tobacco
- Teach your support person about quitting tobacco, especially if they have not used tobacco themselves
- If you are keeping your quit attempt a secret, let your support person know this
- Thank your support person for helping you quit tobacco

**Table 2. My Support People**

Name	Phone Number	Email Address

## CHAPTER 6: Quit Day

### WHAT TO DO ON QUIT DAY

It is finally here, your quit day. This is the day you stop using tobacco for good. Take a moment and say: “I *can* quit smoking...” or “I *can* quit chewing and today is the day!”

Do you have a plan for today? The most important thing is to make your quit day a positive experience. Try not to schedule too many events for today. You want to stay busy, but not feel rushed or under stress. Keep your emergency kit handy. Drink plenty of water, try deep breathing for relaxation, go for a walk, or do other exercises.

It is time to make some changes:

#### DO

- Change your routine
- Switch the order of your morning
- Be active – take a walk
- Have your morning coffee in a new mug
- Drink less caffeine
- Drive to work on a new route
- Take your work break inside
- Get up from the table as soon as you finish eating
- Sit in a different chair to watch TV or read the newspaper

#### KEEP BUSY

- Do something fun like see a movie
- Exercise for 20-30 minutes a day
- Wash your clothes and sheets
- Use substitutes to keep your mouth busy
- Meet with friends who don't smoke
- Go to nonsmoking places like the library
- Drink more water
- Stay away from places where you smoked

#### DON'T

- Feel like smoking has been taken away from you, remember you are better off without it.
- Test yourself by trying a cigarette. This can lead to a full relapse.
- Forget there will be difficult times when you stop smoking: be proud of how well you are doing!
- Drink alcohol and go to bars for a while; this can be too tempting and you may want to smoke.
- Forget to bring nicotine lozenges or nicotine gum with you when you need to go places or do things where you used to smoke.

## HANDLING NICOTINE CRAVINGS

This is the one nicotine withdrawal symptom that can stay with you forever. The cravings will seem more intense the first week and will slowly reduce in intensity and frequency. After the first month, **the cravings might only last a few seconds**. You can make the cravings go away by using a substitute like gum or sugar-free candy, starting an activity, doing deep breathing, or any of the other activities listed above. Remember to review the **DEADS Strategy** from **Chapter 5**.

## EXERCISE

Exercise can be helpful when you are quitting tobacco. Our body produces a substance called endorphins that make you feel better. When you exercise, you produce more endorphins and they can help with cravings for tobacco.

**Q:** How much exercise do you need to do?

Everyone has limitations on how much exercise they can do. You will have to look at yourself and determine where to start. In the military, exercise consisted of running and doing sit-ups and push-ups. If you have not been running lately, then don't expect to do it now, or at least not yet.

If you have not been exercising, you can start with walking or using a stationary bike for 5 minutes a day. Try to increase by 2-3 minutes a week until you can go for 30 minutes a day. The 30-minute session can be split into two 15-minute sessions if you are unable to exercise for longer than 15 minutes. If you are using a stationary bike or another type of cardiovascular equipment, do not start at a high resistance setting. You are exercising at the right intensity if you are lightly panting, but can still hold a conversation while doing the exercise. If you cannot hold a conversation when exercising, then turn down the resistance or slow down your pace.

Activities to consider:

- Walking or jogging
- Tennis
- Dancing
- Golfing without a cart
- Aerobic exercise classes
- Cycling
- Gardening and pushing a lawn mower
- Yoga
- Swimming
- Water walking
- Weight machines
- Aqua aerobics

You may find exercise easier once you quit smoking. This is because you may be breathing better and the circulation of blood in your body has improved. Keep exercising and it will be easier each day.

If your activity is limited and you are unable to walk, try doing chair exercises. This consists of using light weights and doing arm exercises in a chair. An alternative to the weights is to use cans of food (just make sure to use the same type of canned food so the weight is similar). Any type of body movement is good, so work within your limitations. If your doctor limits your exercise due to health reasons such as heart problems, please talk with them before you start exercising.

## HEALTHY EATING

Try adding healthy food choices to your meals and snacks by:

- Eating more fresh fruits and vegetables. If you cannot afford fresh fruit/vegetables, then try buying them frozen.
- Drinking more water, which will help you feel more full and help reduce weight gain
- Eating carrot sticks and celery sticks to help with the hand-to-mouth habit from smoking
- Eating crunchy foods like pretzels, rice cakes, or air popped popcorn, so your mouth has to work
- Eating a small square of dark chocolate or low fat frozen yogurt if craving a sweet
- Eating smaller meals, but more often. If you eat snacks in between meals, you are less likely to overeat. This can help prevent weight gain as well.

# CHAPTER 7: The First Two Weeks After Quit Day

## BENEFITS OF QUITTING

Congratulations for quitting tobacco. This is a very challenging task, but you will be rewarded in many ways. In the first few weeks you may notice:

- Improved breathing
- More energy
- Improved sense of taste and smell
- The yellow staining almost gone from your fingers and sides of your mouth
- Feeling like you are in control instead of the cigarette being in control of you
- More money!

List some improvements you have noticed since your quit day:

List some benefits you are looking forward to in the next few weeks:

## REWARD YOURSELF

By quitting tobacco, you are doing a great thing for your body. This can be challenging and you may feel that it is hard to keep your resolve. Try making a list of rewards and see if this helps keep you motivated during this challenging time.

Rewards could be:

- Buying yourself something special to celebrate quitting
- Splurging on a massage or dinner at a new restaurant
- Seeing a movie or sporting event
- Starting a new hobby
- Beginning exercising

- Using your savings to pay off your bills
- Going on a nice trip after being a non-smoker for six months

To start saving money for your rewards you can put the money you spend each week on tobacco into a piggy bank or savings account. This way you can see the savings accumulate and this can be a reward on its own. You will be amazed at how fast the money you used to spend on tobacco adds up and how soon you will be able to buy your rewards.



Calculate how much money you will save from quitting tobacco products:

- I smoke \_\_\_\_\_ packs/cigarettes per day
- 1 pack of cigarettes costs: \$\_\_\_\_\_
- I spend \$\_\_\_\_\_ per day
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per day on tobacco x 365 days = \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year

### My Rewards

After 1 week without tobacco, I will reward myself with:

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After 2 weeks without tobacco, I will reward myself with:

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After 1 month without tobacco, I will reward myself with:

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After 3 months without tobacco, I will reward myself with:

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After 6 months without tobacco, I will reward myself with:

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After 12 months without tobacco, I will reward myself with:

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# Tobacco Cessation Resources

## WEB AND TELEPHONE RESOURCES

- VHA Tobacco & Health  
[www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking)
- VA Smokefree.gov Veterans Site  
[smokefree.gov/veterans](http://smokefree.gov/veterans)
- Quit VET, Veterans Smoking Quitline  
1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838)  
8am-10pm, Monday-Friday (ET)  
[www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking/quitline.asp](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking/quitline.asp)
- SmokefreeVET Text Message Program  
Text the word VET to 47848 or sign up online:  
[www.smokefree.gov/VET](http://www.smokefree.gov/VET)
- Stay Quit Coach smartphone app  
<https://mobile.va.gov/app/stay-quit-coach>
- Smokefree VET Facebook support group  
<https://www.facebook.com/smokefreevet>
- Smokefree.gov  
[www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)
- Women.smokefree.gov  
[www.women.smokefree.gov](http://www.women.smokefree.gov)
- My HealthVet  
[www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco) and  
[www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/2010/consumer\\_booklet](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2010/consumer_booklet)
- Office of the Surgeon General  
[www.surgeongeneral.gov/priorities/tobacco/index.html](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/priorities/tobacco/index.html)
- Healthfinder Tobacco Resources Page  
[www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=860](http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=860)

## SPIT TOBACCO RESOURCES

- Spit Tobacco: A Guide to Quitting  
[www.nidcr.nih.gov/OralHealth/Topics/SmokelessTobacco/SmokelessTobaccoAGuideforQuitting.htm](http://www.nidcr.nih.gov/OralHealth/Topics/SmokelessTobacco/SmokelessTobaccoAGuideforQuitting.htm)
- Betobaccofree.gov  
<http://betobaccofree.hhs.gov/about-tobacco/smokeless-tobacco/index.html>
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/smokeless](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/smokeless)



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# Appendix A

## DEEP BREATHING EXERCISES<sup>1</sup>

### ■ What is deep breathing?

Deep breathing involves using your diaphragm muscle to help bring about a state of physiological relaxation. The diaphragm is a large muscle that rests across the bottom of your rib cage. When you inhale, the diaphragm muscle drops, opening up space so air can come in. When watching someone do this it looks like their stomach is filling with air. This type of breathing helps activate the part of your nervous system that controls relaxation. It can lead to decreased heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension; and an overall feeling of relaxation. It is also something you can do quickly and easily, almost anywhere.

### ■ Why be concerned with how I'm breathing?

- To increase your awareness of the role breathing plays in increased physical tension and your body's response to stress.
- To lower your level of stress-related arousal and tension.
- To understand how to take calm, relaxing breaths that will break the cycle of increasing arousal during stressful situations.

### ■ What is the best way to use deep breathing exercises?

- Use these exercises frequently.
- Take deep breaths at the first signs of stress, anxiety, physical tension, or other symptoms.
- Schedule time for relaxation.  
My scheduled time for deep breathing will be \_\_\_\_\_.

### ■ Instructions

- Find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down. It is sometimes easier to first learn deep breathing while lying on your back as it makes it easier to feel the correct stomach motion.
- Place one hand, palm side down, on your chest. Place the other hand, palm side down, on your stomach.

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<sup>1</sup> Hunter, C. L., Goodie, J. L., Oordt, M. S., & Dobmeyer, A. C. (2009). Integrated behavioral health in primary care: Step-by-step guidance for assessment and intervention, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Adapted from the Center for Integrated Healthcare (a VA Office of Mental Health Services' Center of Excellence), *Deep Breathing patient handout* (Version 1.0), March 2010.

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- Breathe in through your nose to a slow count of 3 or 4. Notice the motion of each hand. When you breathe in and out, the hand on your chest should move very little, and the hand on your stomach should push out significantly on your inhale, and go back down on your exhale. Your abdomen should gently expand as if you are filling a balloon in your stomach each time you inhale.
  - Exhale through your nose and continue to notice the motion of your hands. Alternately, you can exhale through your mouth while making a sighing sound.
  - Start with just a few deep breaths and stop if you feel light-headed. With practice, you can increase the number of deep breaths without becoming light-headed.

