

# QUIT FOR LIFE



JOURNEYING TOWARDS

A SMOKE-FREE LIFE.

[QUITSMOKING.GOV.SG](http://QUITSMOKING.GOV.SG)





# Congratulations on taking the first small step.

Just by reading this book, you've already moved ahead towards a smoke-free life – that's a small victory worth celebrating! Remember to do the same each time you overcome a hurdle in your quit journey.

*"I smoked for 25 years, but I'm now a proud triathlete at 56 years old. Know that it's never too late to start stubbing out."  
– Justin Tan, Successful Quitter*

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## 01. Why Quit Smoking?

# Reflection

Identifying your personal motivations for quitting can help you stay on track. Start by asking yourself the following questions:

### Why did I smoke my first cigarette?

- Did it have to do with circumstances at that point in time (e.g. stressed, peer pressure, social obligations)?
- Do these reasons still matter now? (e.g. Do I still need to look cool in front of my friends?)

### What have I sacrificed for my smoking habit?

- Have I neglected spending time with my loved ones because I wanted to take smoke breaks?
- Have I spent on cigarettes what I should have used for other expenses?

### If I stop smoking now, what can I spend the extra time and money on?

- Organising more meet-ups with my loved ones?
- Enrolling in skills or hobbies workshops?

## Set a Date

It won't help if you keep telling yourself that you'll start quitting someday. It's easier when you decide to quit earlier. And the best time to quit is when you're feeling less stressed – if you can, start now!

Make a commitment to kick off your quit journey on a set date.

**With the help of my family, friends and Quit Consultants, I pledge to quit smoking on:**

/   /



# A Healthier New You

Once you've stubbed out, all it takes is 8 hours for you to feel the healing effects. The benefits continue for years after your last cigarette.

**Within 8 hours**  
Carbon monoxide levels in your body drop, while oxygen levels increase to normal

**Within 14 days**  
You're free from anxiety

**Within 48 hours**

- Your chances of a heart attack decrease
- Your senses of smell and taste improve

**Within 3 days**

- Breathing is easier as your bronchial tubes relax
- You feel more energised



**Within 3 months**

- Blood circulation improves
- For men, sperm quality returns to normal
- For women, fertility improves
- Walking and aerobic exercises become easier

**Within 28 days**  
You cough less, have stronger lungs and can move around with greater ease



**Within 6 months**  
Say goodbye to coughing, sinus congestion, tiredness and shortness of breath



**Within 1 year**  
Risk of smoking-related heart attack is reduced by 50%

**Within 5 years**  
Risk of mouth, throat and oesophageal cancer is halved



**Within 10 years**

- Risk of lung cancer is reduced by 50%
- Risk of bladder, kidney and pancreatic cancers also decreases

**Within 15 years**  
Risk of heart attack and stroke is equal to a person who has never smoked

# More Reasons to Quit

It doesn't just stop at health benefits – there are definitely more reasons to quit.

## Better Finances

It pays to quit – smoking is an expensive habit. With an average cost of \$16\*/pack/day, those savings add up! If you think about it, it's almost as if you're getting a pay raise.

*\*The pricing of cigarettes is accurate at the time of publishing.*

## Family Well-being

- No more smoke breaks means more family time.
- Your loved ones live in a healthy environment without secondhand and thirdhand smoke.
- They're also less likely to get breathing issues like asthma.
- Your children enjoy a healthier school life as they fall sick less often.
- Your children look up to you. They're less likely to pick up smoking when they see that you don't smoke.

## Social Bonus

- Fresher breath, better-smelling hair and a brighter smile.
- Less anxiety and nicotine-related stress means better relationships with people.
- No more inconvenient interruptions for smoke breaks.
- More spare cash to spend for leisure.

What's your reason for quitting? Write it down on the next page and use it as a reminder.

## 02. Ready to Quit?

# Your Reason to Quit

Identifying your motivation will help you to succeed. Set your reason for quitting as your phone's wallpaper. It could be a note, a family photo or even an inspirational quote – use it as a constant reminder!



# Preparation Checklist

Here's what you can do leading up to your quit day.

## A week before your quit day

- Write down your reason(s) for quitting.
- Decide on your quit method.
- Have an emergency plan to beat unexpected cravings (e.g. a workout session).
- Talk to a Quit Consultant\* and decide if you need pharmacotherapy (treatment through medication).

## A day before your quit day

- Throw away all ashtrays, lighters and cigarettes.
- Plan activities to occupy and distract yourself.
- Rally your friends and loved ones to help you.

## On your quit day

- Stop smoking completely.
- Remind yourself you are a non-smoker.
- Remind yourself of your reasons for quitting whenever you're tempted to light up.
- Call your support buddies or the QuitLine (1800 438 2000<sup>^</sup>) if you require any help.

Before you begin your journey, know what to expect, so that you're better prepared. The following chapter will equip you with the knowledge you need.

\*Visit [IQUITSMOKING.GOV.SG](http://IQUITSMOKING.GOV.SG) to find a Quit Consultant near you.

<sup>^</sup>Airtime charges apply for mobile calls to 1800 service lines.

## 03. Preparing Yourself

# What's Your Quitter Personality?



When you know yourself better, you can tailor your quit methods for a higher chance of success.

Find out what kind of quitter you can become based on your past smoking patterns. It's fine if you belong to more than one category – just focus on what best reflects your old habits.

- I need a cigarette as soon as I wake up.
- I think smoking is really enjoyable.
- I smoke to be more awake and to think better.
- I feel weak if I don't smoke.
- I feel uncomfortable without a cigarette in my hand.
- I enjoy smoking during my break or after a meal.
- I need to smoke every few hours.
- I am less stressed after I smoke.
- I smoke when I'm angry or upset.
- I enjoy the process of lighting up a cigarette (e.g. tapping the cigarette and flicking the lighter).
- I can't last half a day without smoking.
- I sometimes find myself smoking... but can't remember lighting up!

The shape you selected most reflects your main "quitter personality". Based on that, here are some tips on quitting.



### △ Cravings-prone Quitter

Your body craves nicotine so you smoke more often. It can be as addictive as heroin or cocaine.

What should I do?

- Spend more time around non-smokers, and in places where smoking is banned.
- Consult your pharmacist or doctor on pharmacotherapy.



### ○ Stressed Quitter

You smoke to cope with stress or to perk up. You find excuses to light up but you don't really need to smoke.

What should I do?

- Pick up a new hobby or try other forms of relaxation.
- Treat yourself with your savings from not buying cigarettes.



### □ Creature-of-Habit Quitter

Some things just don't feel right if you don't take your regular smoke breaks. That's because you've associated smoking with certain routines, places and people.

What should I do?

- Change your daily routine. Need a cigarette with coffee? Drink orange juice instead. Enjoy a cigarette after meals? Dine at a smoke-free restaurant.
- Swap your smoke break for a (healthy) snack break.

# Quit Methods

When there's a will, there's a way. You can speak to a Quit Consultant to help you select a suitable quit method.



## 1 Cold Turkey HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Pick a date and stop smoking completely from that day onwards. Sounds difficult, but many I Quit programme quitters have succeeded using this method!



## 2 Count Down

Reduce your number of cigarettes day by day, or week by week. Aim to reach zero by a target date.



## 3 Delaying

Put off your next puff till later. Try your best to postpone your cigarette break by an hour or more, and progress towards not smoking for an entire day. You could be smoke-free in a week!

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
8am	9am	11am	2pm	6pm	11pm	<b>QUIT</b>



## Pharmacotherapy

Together with support from Quit Consultants, pharmacotherapy – the use of drugs – can more than double your chances of success. Your doctor or a Quit Consultant can help you better understand your smoking habits. Always consult a doctor or pharmacist for advice on the right medicine to use.

### Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

NRT works by releasing small amounts of nicotine into your body to reduce your cigarette cravings and chemical dependence. It is most beneficial for heavily-addicted smokers (>15 cigarettes a day).

You can get nicotine patches, gum and lozenges from pharmacies without a prescription. Different people require different doses, so what worked for your friend might not work for you.

### Prescription Drugs

- Varenicline tablets
- Bupropion Hydrochloride tablets

These 2 drugs do not contain nicotine but can help reduce your cravings and withdrawal symptoms.

## 04. Select Your Preferred Quit Journey

# I Quit programme is now more personalised for you

The new I Quit programme offers personalised journeys designed to set you up for success.

### Here's what your smoke-free journey could look like:



SMS

Great if you prefer a self-directed journey via text messaging.

#### FIRST 28 DAYS

- Daily text messages

#### OVER 12 MONTHS

- 2 text messages every month
- 1 call from QuitLine at the end of 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> month

OR



QuitLine

Great if you prefer a balance of self-directed quit efforts with additional phone counselling support.

#### FIRST 28 DAYS

- 3 text messages per week
- 1 weekly QuitLine call

#### OVER 12 MONTHS

- 2 text messages every month
- 1 call from QuitLine at the end of 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> month

OR



Face-to-face  
Counselling

Great if you prefer to go smoke-free with dedicated attention and Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)\*.

#### FIRST 6 WEEKS

- 2 text messages per week (over 28 days)
- 3 face-to-face counselling sessions\* at pharmacies
- 3 follow-up calls from a counsellor

#### OVER 12 MONTHS

- 2 text messages every month
- 1 call from counsellor at the end of 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> month

\*Sessions are conducted once per week. This is known as the Start to S.T.O.P. (Speak To Our Pharmacists) programme, and is championed by Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore at selected retail pharmacies. Terms and conditions apply.

\*Participants will have to purchase the NRT separately from the pharmacies, as it will not be provided within the programme.

Sign up for the I Quit programme at [GO.GOV.SG/IQUIT-SMOKING-BOOKLET](https://www.go.gov.sg/iQuit-smoking-booklet)



## 05. Managing the First Few Weeks

# Beating Withdrawal Symptoms



Being mentally and physically prepared can help you get through your withdrawal symptoms. Here's what you may face in your first few weeks of quitting:



### Constant cravings

As your body clears out the nicotine, you'll feel a strong urge to replenish it, due to its addictiveness. Follow the 4Ds:

- **D**istract yourself by doing something else.
- **D**elay lighting up.
- **D**eep breathing exercises.
- **D**rink a glass of water or milk slowly.



### Feelings of irritability

Your brain is adjusting to a nicotine-free life. Try doing these:

- Relax with soothing music, light-hearted movies or peppermint tea/oil.
- Pre-empt family and friends and seek their understanding.
- Do light exercises like brisk walking to release uplifting endorphins.



### Headaches

Your brain is most likely adapting to the increased level of oxygen.

- Get enough sleep.
- Stay in quiet, relaxed surroundings.
- Go easy on your eyes. Read and watch TV with adequate lighting.



### Tiredness

Nicotine is a stimulant that forces your body to feel awake. As your blood circulation improves, you'll feel fresh without smoking.

- Get enough sleep.
- Take small, regular meals to regulate your blood sugar level and boost your energy.
- Perk up with ginger or herbal tea instead of coffee.



### Coughing

Your lungs are starting to function properly again and are working to clear tar, dead cells and extra mucus accumulated from the cigarettes.

- Sip warm water.
- Suck on sugar-free cough drops.



### Tingling hands and feet

As more oxygen gets to your fingers and toes due to improved blood circulation, your body needs time to adapt. In the meantime:

- Go for massages.
- Distract yourself with stretching, light exercises or hobbies.



Withdrawal symptoms are positive signs that your body is recovering. Hang in there and remind yourself your reason for quitting! You could also get support from the 'I Quit Club' Facebook page, where you will find tips and inspirational stories from fellow quitters.

However, should your symptoms become unbearable, you may want to consider pharmacotherapy (see page 14). Consult your pharmacist or doctor for advice.



## Relapse Alert



Slip-ups can and do happen, but don't be discouraged. Sometimes it does take more than one quitting attempt, so don't stop trying! Here are some ways you can bounce back from a relapse and increase your chances of success the next time:



### Adjust your pharmacotherapy

You may require a different dose or form of pharmacotherapy. Ask your pharmacist or doctor to re-evaluate your medication.



### Manage stress with healthier methods

Learn to manage stress healthily using relaxation exercises, music and self-care techniques (e.g. massages, soothing herbal tea).



### Surround yourself with positive influences

Stay away from situations where you'll feel tempted to smoke, and surround yourself with positive people who encourage you to quit. For more support, you can also talk to our QuitLine Consultants at 1800 438 2000\*.

\*Airtime charges apply for mobile calls to 1800 service lines.



### Manage your weight

After quitting, overindulging in food is possible with your newly-sensitive taste buds. The resultant weight gain may be discouraging, but this is only temporary.



#### Try this:

- Eat small, well-balanced meals throughout the day and don't skip meals.
- Replace high-fat and sugar-rich snacks with low-calorie options such as fresh fruit or vegetables.
- Stay hydrated.
- Increase your physical activity. Just 30 minutes a day for 5 or more days a week can do wonders – with a bonus endorphin boost!

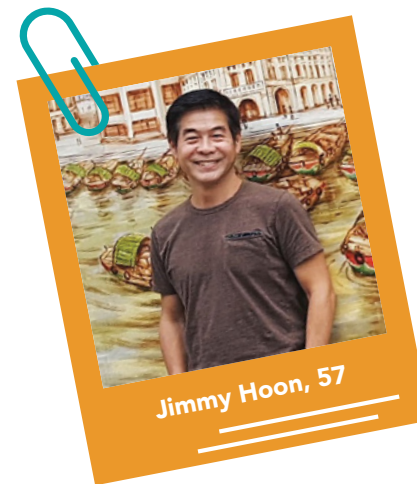
REMEMBER:  
IT TAKES  
**JUST**  
**ONE**  
CIGARETTE  
*TO UNDO ALL YOUR PROGRESS*

06. You're Not Alone

**Testimonials**

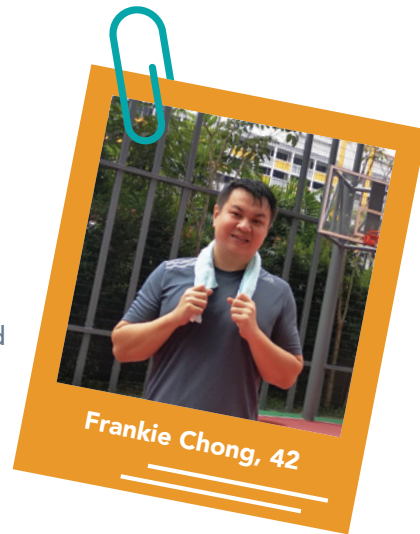
Motivate yourself with these stories from other successful quitters.

"I used to be a heavy smoker. It got so bad that I even sacrificed my meals to buy cigarettes. Soon, I realised I couldn't let smoking get the better of me anymore. I went cold turkey for 3 weeks. During this trying period, I spent time with my loved ones, and focused on changing my ways for the better. I reminded myself that I was doing this for those I care about. Finally, I successfully quit."



"I thought I was young and my smoking habit didn't really matter... not until it all caught up with me – my arteries were severely choked. So, I stopped smoking and started running with a SAFRA Running Club. My first marathon gave me a greater sense of fulfilment than smoking ever did."

“I had to undergo a knee surgery, so I used the opportunity to stop smoking through my recovery period. Each day was tough because I couldn’t move around much. I joined the I Quit programme and that helped me quit. For those trying to quit: nobody promised it’ll be easy, but give yourself a chance.”



“When my wife and I first found out that we were expecting, we decided to quit for good. A friend recommended us some good reads she said would help. I was sceptical. But I pressed on and continued keeping myself occupied – book after book. And I really stopped smoking. Right now, I’m just glad I’m able to set a good example for my son.”



## WE ARE HERE FOR YOU.

Here’s a range of services to help you throughout your quit journey.



Support services are available at primary healthcare locations, various non-governmental organisations and retail pharmacy chains.



In addition, HPB manages QuitLine (**1800 438 2000\***), which is staffed by trained Quit Consultants who provide personalised support and advice on quitting smoking. Further help is available at [\*\*IQUITSMOKING.GOV.SG\*\*](https://www.quitline.gov.sg)



You can also join the I QUIT Club on Facebook for a support network of fellow quitters: [\*\*facebook.com/IQUITClub\*\*](https://www.facebook.com/IQUITClub)

\*Airtime charges apply for mobile calls to 1800 service lines.



**[IQUITSMOKING.GOV.SG](http://IQUITSMOKING.GOV.SG)**

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