



Smoking & Vaping (Nicotine) Cessation Guide

Why quitting matters

- Cigarettes and most vapes deliver **addictive nicotine** that reinforces a dopamine-reward cycle → cravings, anxiety, and dependence
 - Increases risk of heart disease, lung disease, and cancer (smoking), and can impact airway health, heart rate, and blood pressure (vaping)
 - Can worsen sleep, mood, and energy levels
 - Many people notice **better breathing, energy, and focus within 1–2 weeks** of quitting
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What to expect after quitting

First 72 hours

- Irritability, cravings, headaches
- Nicotine is clearing from your body (this is the hardest phase)

Week 1–2

- Cravings come in waves (usually 3–5 minutes)
- Sleep and mood begin improving

Weeks 3–4

- Brain receptors begin resetting
 - Cravings become less frequent and less intense
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Medication support options

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

- **Patch:** Provides steady nicotine levels to reduce baseline cravings
- **Gum or Lozenges:** Used for breakthrough cravings
 - ✓ Best results come from **combining patch + gum/lozenge**

Prescription options

- **Varenicline (Chantix):** Reduces cravings and blocks nicotine reward
 - **Bupropion (Wellbutrin/Zyban):** Helps with cravings and mood support
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Behavioral strategies

- Delay the urge → wait 5 minutes (cravings pass)
 - Drink cold water, chew gum, or use a straw (helps replace the hand-to-mouth habit)
 - Identify triggers (driving, after meals, stress, social situations)
 - Replace the routine, not just the nicotine
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Simple quit plan

1. Choose a quit date (within 1–2 weeks)
 2. Start nicotine patch on quit day
 3. Use gum/lozenges for cravings
 4. Remove cigarettes, vapes, and related products from your environment
 5. Tell at least one person for accountability
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Support resources

- [Smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov) – quit plans and text support
 - Truth Initiative - truthinitiative.org/ – text-based support for vaping
 - 1-800-QUIT-NOW – free coaching and support
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Helpful reminders

- Cravings peak and pass—they always go away
 - You are breaking both a nicotine addiction and a habit
 - Slips can happen—do not restart, just keep going
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If you have questions or need additional support, please contact our office.

Text us at 913-513-2166 or message us through your patient portal

You can do this!