



*His Branches
Health Services*

Withdrawal ...and Beyond

Coping with Withdrawal Symptoms

Most smokers find the first days or even the first few weeks after quitting to be the hardest—that's when withdrawal symptoms are at their strongest. Remember, this discomfort is temporary and you will feel better soon. What's more, withdrawal symptoms are a sign that your body is recovering from the effects of smoking.

| <i>Withdrawal Symptom</i> | <i>What To Do</i> |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Tenseness/irritability | Go for a walk. Take deep breaths. Soak in a warm bath. Meditate. |
| Depression | Use positive self-talk. Speak to a friend or family member. See your doctor if the depression is intense or does not go away. |
| Headaches | Use mild analgesics. Drink plenty of water. Relax and rest. |
| Appetite changes | Follow a well-balanced diet. Choose healthy, low-fat snacks such as fruit or vegetables. |
| Constipation, gas | Drink plenty of fluids. Eat lots of fruits, vegetables and high fiber cereal. |
| Insomnia | Avoid beverages containing caffeine (e.g., coffee, tea, cola), particularly before bed. Try relaxation exercises before bed. |
| Difficulty concentrating | Break large projects into smaller tasks. Take regular breaks. |
| Cough, dry throat & mouth, nasal drip | Drink plenty of fluids. |
| Dizziness | Sit down and rest until it passes. |

Cravings and Temptations

There will be times after quitting and even after your withdrawal symptoms have passed, that you will have cravings and be tempted to “light up.” That’s why it’s important to be prepared with some coping strategies when you’re faced with smoking triggers and “high risk” smoking situations.

| <i>Triggers/Situations</i> | <i>Coping Strategy</i> |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Other people smoking | In the short term, stay away from social situations where others will be smoking. Avoid the smoking room at work. Sit in the nonsmoking section in restaurants. Ask smoking friends not to offer you cigarettes. |
| Alcohol | It’s best to avoid alcohol altogether, at least in the short term. |
| Coffee | Avoid coffee and other caffeinated drinks. Choose water or fruit juices instead. |
| First thing in the morning | Change your routine—take a shower or go for a walk right after you get up. |
| After meals | Get up from the table immediately. Wash the dishes. Clean your teeth. Phone a friend. |
| Urges to smoke | The urge to smoke only lasts for a few minutes, so distract yourself until it passes. Do a crossword puzzle, eat a healthy snack, sip water slowly or watch television. |
| Stress | Identify sources of stress, then eliminate or change your reaction to them. Use relaxation techniques such as deep breathing or meditation. |



Remember, you can do it!