

TOBACCO

QUITTING SMOKING



Australian Government
Department of Health

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF QUITTING?

The benefits of quitting smoking are almost immediate and include easier breathing, increased energy and activity levels and the positive effect this could have on your overall health and quality of life.

You will feel the benefits of quitting straightaway as your body repairs itself. Depending on the number of cigarettes you smoke, typical benefits of stopping include:¹

- **After 12 hours** almost all of the nicotine is out of your system.
- **After 24 hours** the level of carbon monoxide (CO) in your blood has dropped dramatically. You now have more oxygen in your bloodstream.
- **After 5 days** most nicotine by-products have gone.
- **Within days** your sense of taste and smell improves.
- **Within a month** your blood pressure returns to its normal level and your immune system begins to show signs of recovery.
- **Within 2 months** your lungs will no longer be producing extra phlegm caused by smoking.
- **After 12 months** your increased risk of dying from heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker.
- **Stopping smoking** reduces the incidence and progression of lung disease including chronic bronchitis and emphysema.
- **After 10 years** of stopping, your risk of lung cancer is less than half that of a continuing smoker and continues to decline (provided the disease is not already present).
- **After 15 years** your risk of heart attack and stroke is almost the same as that of a person who has never smoked.²

Quitting smoking can be one of the most difficult, yet rewarding, things a person can do.

Apart from the health benefits of quitting, there is a considerable financial benefit from not buying cigarettes. A packet a day cigarette smoker can save over \$5,000 a year by quitting.

HOW CAN I QUIT AND WHERE DO I GO FOR HELP?

Smoking is a powerful addiction and it takes most smokers several attempts to quit successfully. Therefore, smokers should persevere even if their initial attempts to quit are unsuccessful.

Since February 2011, the Australian Government has provided additional support for smokers to quit, through extended subsidies for nicotine replacement therapies (NRT) and other smoking cessation support medications on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. Further extensions to these subsidies, to provide for a broader range of NRT, commenced on 1 January 2012. These subsidies help remove cost as a barrier for people who want to take the important step of quitting smoking.

There are many services available to help a person to quit smoking. The Quitline (13 7848/13 QUIT) is a good place to start for information, support and advice to help achieve the goal of quitting.





FOR MORE INFORMATION

There are many places you can find out more information about tobacco and smoking, including health information and advice to quit. These include:

Quitline

Telephone service for smokers who want to quit **13 7848 (13 Quit)**

www.quitnow.gov.au

Provides information about smoking and quitting, including a downloadable quit phone app My QuitBuddy

www.yourhealth.gov.au

Commonwealth government website with information about tobacco plain packaging and health warnings

www.oxygen.org.au

Website for young people with information about smoking, tobacco and the tobacco industry

www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au

An encyclopaedia of just about anything you ever wanted to know about smoking and ways to control it

INTERNATIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The United States Office of the Surgeon General publishes two informative booklets:

Health effects of smoking

www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/tobaccosmoke/index.html

Preventing smoking amongst young people

www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2012/consumer_booklet/pdfs/consumer.pdf

Some state and territory based websites with information about smoking and quitting are listed below.

| State/Territory | Website |
|---|--|
| New South Wales (I Can Quit) | www.icanquit.org.au |
| Queensland (QLD Health) | www.health.qld.gov.au/atod/prevention/quitline.asp |
| Victoria (Quit Victoria) | www.quit.org.au |
| Western Australia (Cancer Council) | www.cancerwa.asn.au |
| Australian Capital Territory (Cancer Council) | www.actcancer.org |
| Northern Territory (NT Health) | www.health.nt.gov.au/Alcohol_and_Other_Drugs/Tobacco/Quitline |
| Tasmania (Quit TAS) | www.quittas.org.au |
| South Australia (Quit SA) | www.quitsa.org.au |

Kids Helpline

Free, private and confidential telephone and online counselling service for young people aged 5–25 years.

Tel 1800 55 1800

Lifeline

A 24 hour crisis help line. **Tel 13 11 14**. Also provides one-on-one crisis support online chat.

www.lifeline.org.au/Find-Help/Online-Services/crisis-chat

SOURCES

1. Scollo MM, Winstanley MH. Tobacco in Australia: facts and issues. 4th ed. Melbourne: Cancer Council Victoria, 2012. Available from www.TobaccoInAustralia.org.au
2. Australian Government's campaign site: www.quitnow.gov.au

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