

# HEALTH BENEFITS START ON DAY ONE

Discover the immediate and long-term benefits of quitting smoking.

## Immediate benefits<sup>1</sup>

Heart rate and blood pressure, which are abnormally high while smoking, begin to return to normal.

**Within a few hours**, the level of carbon monoxide in the blood begins to decline. (Carbon monoxide reduces the blood's ability to carry oxygen.)

**Within a few weeks**, people who quit smoking have improved circulation, produce less phlegm, and don't cough or wheeze as often.

**Within several months** of quitting, people can expect substantial improvements in lung function.

## Long-term benefits<sup>1</sup>

**Quitting reduces the risk of cancer**, heart disease and COPD, caused by smoking.

**Regardless of age, you are less likely to die from a smoking-related illness** than those who continue to smoke.

**You can be tobacco-free.**  
**For help, visit [BeTobaccoFree.gov](http://BeTobaccoFree.gov).**

## START TO QUIT

Prepare an action plan with these five steps<sup>2</sup>:

1. Set a quit date. Pick a date within the next 2 weeks. Don't choose a day where you know you will be busy, stressed, or tempted to smoke.
2. Tell family and friends. Explain to them how they can help you quit and what your triggers are. Quitting is easier when you have support.
3. Anticipate and plan for challenges. Cravings and withdrawal are common. Avoid triggers; specific persons, places, or activities that make you feel like smoking.
4. Remove cigarettes and lighters from your home, work and car. Don't save one pack of cigarettes "just in case". Remove the smell of smoke by cleaning your clothes, car and home.
5. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) options such as nicotine gum, patches, or lozenges.

**Get ready to quit with more helpful information at [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov).**

Together, all the way.™



1. "Harms of Smoking and Health Benefits of Quitting", Cancer.gov, accessed Sept. 2, 2014, <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Tobacco/cessation>

2. "Prepare to Quit". SmokeFree.gov, accessed Sept 15, 2014, <http://smokefree.gov/steps-to-prepare>.

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