

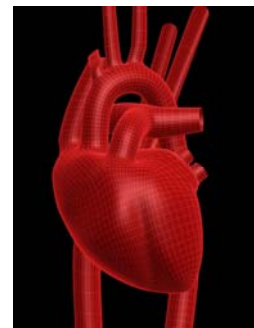
# Smoking

## It's never too late to quit



### Making a change for your health

- Choosing a healthy lifestyle is the best thing you can do to protect your health and the health of those around you.
- If you quit smoking, it can lower your chance of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, breathing problems and other medical conditions.
- It is never too late to quit smoking.



Please visit the UHN Patient Education website for more health information:  
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Author: Kelly Francis, Dorota Gan & Danielle Small  
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## **Some reasons that may make you want to think about quitting**

- Smoking is a risk to your health. It changes the way your brain works and, fills your lungs with as many as 4000 poisonous chemicals.
- The carbon monoxide you inhale while smoking lowers the level of oxygen in the tissues of your body. This can cause your heart to work harder.
- If you smoke, your risk increases for major heart attack, stroke and diseases of the blood vessels.
- If you smoke, your children may have a higher chance of getting sick, even if you smoke outside your home.
- In Canada, 45,000 people die every year due to the effects of smoking and second-hand smoke. Many of these deaths happen before the age of 70.



## **Did you know that smoking is an addiction?**

1. The tobacco inside a cigarette contains nicotine, which is a powerful and highly addictive substance.
2. When you smoke a cigarette and breathe in, the nicotine in the cigarette smoke is rapidly absorbed into your blood stream.
3. Your body quickly learns to “like” or “crave” nicotine.
4. When you stop smoking, your body’s nicotine level drops, leaving you feeling the effects of withdrawal - you may feel irritable, restless, crave for another cigarette or feel like you cannot concentrate.
5. This “craving - withdrawal - smoke cycle” is very similar to other addictions, but can be harder to beat.

**Quitting smoking is the single most effective thing that you can do to improve the quality of your life!**



## Quitting smoking today will lower your risk of heart attack tomorrow

If you quit smoking, it can improve your health almost right away.

### If you were to stop smoking right now...

<b>Within 20 minutes</b> Your blood pressure, heart rate, body temperature in your hands and feet would return to normal
<b>Within 8 hours</b> The amount of oxygen in your blood would improve
<b>Within 24 hours</b> Your sense of taste and smell would improve
<b>Within 3 days</b> Your lung capacity would improve, your airway would relax and, if your airway has not been damaged by smoking, your breathing would be easier
<b>2 weeks to 3 months</b> Your circulation (blood flow in your body) would improve and, walking would be easier as your lungs begin to work better
<b>At 1 year</b> Your risk of heart disease has been cut in half
<b>At 5-15 years</b> Your risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer would continue to lower

## How can I quit?

There are many different ways for you to try to quit smoking. Most people who are successful use one or two different ways that are comfortable for them and, best suit their personal needs. The more support you have from your family, friends and your community, the easier it will be for you to quit.



- The “Cold Turkey” method is the hardest way to stay smoke-free. “Cold Turkey” means quitting without any form of medication, written material or counseling to help you stay smoke-free.
- Self-help materials such as pamphlets, books and online resources will help you to get ready to quit. These will give you ideas to cope with cravings and help you to identify “triggers” that may tempt you to smoke while going through the quitting process. Self-help materials are best used in combination with other methods.
- The “Smokers Help Line” is staffed by counselors who have been trained to help people to stop smoking. They will actively listen to you, give you information about ways to quit smoking, help you to find resources in your community, or offer other support that is right for you.
- Counseling can range from brief contact with a trained professional, to more intense treatment over the course of a few weeks to a few months. This type of program can help smokers learn ways to cope with cravings, and gain new skills in stress management and prevent you from starting to smoke again.
- The Pharmacological method includes the use of medications such as Zyban® and Champix®, as well as nicotine patches, gums and lozenges. These products will help you to manage your withdrawal symptoms while you become smoke-free.

## Common symptoms of nicotine withdrawal:

The symptoms of nicotine withdrawal are different from person to person. It is important for you be aware of these symptoms; you may want to talk about them with your health care provider: Help is available.

1. Anxiety
2. Feeling irritable or restless
3. Difficulty concentrating
4. Difficulty sleeping
5. Feeling depressed
6. Craving for a cigarette
7. Increased appetite



## Who can I talk to if I am thinking about quitting?

You can always talk to a member of your healthcare team for more information on quitting. You may also wish to talk about one of the methods to stop smoking that is listed on this poster. You can also find more support to help you quit smoking from:

- Smokers Helpline - Call them at 1-877-513-5333
- Website: [www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca)

