

Quit Smoking for a Healthier New Year

The start of a new year gives you the chance for change. What better change than ridding yourself of a habit that causes¹:

- Shortness of breath
- Heart, lung, and other diseases
- Lung and other cancers
- Health risks to others from secondhand smoke

Start the new year by quitting smoking

Once you stop smoking, the benefits can start right away²:

- In minutes, your blood pressure may go down
- After just 1 day, your chance of a heart attack may go down
- Between 1 and 9 months into the new year, you may have less coughing, congestion, and shortness of breath
- By next New Year's Eve, your excess risk of heart disease may be cut in half

If you haven't already set a quit date, mark your calendar for January 1, and:

- Talk to your doctor about how you can quit
- Make a strong commitment to quit and stay quit
- Write out your reasons for quitting. Hang the list in a place where you will see it often
- Make a detailed "quit plan" with a timeline. Include rewards bought with the money saved from not having to buy cigarettes
- Find a "quit buddy" or person who is as committed to quitting as you are
- Create a support network of people in your life who will help you get through the withdrawal symptoms and keep you focused on quitting
- Take 1 day at a time as you count down your first year of being quit
- Celebrate your successes!

A new year, a new you...

As the calendar changes, so can you! Set your quit date. Start fresh or renew your commitment. Keep it going. Think of yourself as a happy and healthy nonsmoker. Make smart resolutions. Follow them through with commitment, a positive plan of action, and support.

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References:

1. American Cancer Society. Cigarette smoking.
http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_10_2X_Cigarette_Smoking.asp?sitearea=PED.
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2. American Lung Association. Quit smoking. Benefits.
<http://www.lungusa.org/site/pp.asp?c=dvLUK9O0E&b=33568>. Accessed March 25, 2008.