



## ***YOUR GUIDE TO A HEALTHIER LIFE: QUITTING SMOKING AND VAPING***

In recognition of World No Tobacco Day on 31 May, we're raising awareness of the detrimental effect nicotine can have on your health.

Quitting smoking isn't just about improving your health in the short term – it's about investing in your well-being for years to come. Here are some long-term health benefits of quitting smoking that you can look forward to:

- **Reduced risk of cancer:** Quitting smoking lowers your risk of developing various types of cancer, including lung, throat, and mouth cancer.
- **Improved sense of taste and smell:** Smoking dulls your sense of taste and smell, but quitting can gradually restore it, allowing you to enjoy food and aromas more fully.
- **Enhanced quality of life:** Quitting smoking can improve your overall quality of life, including better physical fitness, increased energy levels, and improved mental health.

### **THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF SMOKING**

Let's start with your heart. Simply put, smoking makes it work harder. When you quit smoking, your heart gets a break. It starts to function better, reducing your risk of heart disease.

Breathing is another thing affected by smoking. Have you noticed how hard it is to catch your breath after climbing stairs? That's because smoking damages your lungs. But when you quit, your lungs start to heal. Breathing gets easier, and you feel more energetic.

But it's not just your heart and lungs that benefit. Quitting smoking improves your overall health. Your body can better fight off sickness, and you'll have more energy for things you love, like playing with your kids or going for a walk.

### **BEHAVIOURAL STRATEGIES**

Quitting smoking is not just about breaking a physical addiction – it's also about changing behaviours. Here are some behavioural strategies and coping mechanisms to help you deal with cravings and triggers:

- **Identify triggers:** Pay attention to situations, emotions, or activities that make you want to smoke. Once you know your triggers, you can come up with alternative coping strategies.
- **Find healthy distractions:** When a craving hits, distract yourself with a healthy activity like going for a walk, chewing gum, or practising deep breathing exercises.
- **Stay busy:** Keep your hands and mind occupied with activities that keep you busy and engaged, such as



mental  
health



financial  
wellbeing



physical  
health



legal  
advice

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reading, cooking, or spending time with friends who support your decision to quit.

- **Reward yourself:** Set milestones and reward yourself for reaching them. Treat yourself to something special every time you hit a quitting milestone, whether it's a week, a month, or a year smoke-free.

## KICK THE HABIT, CUT THE COSTS

Quitting smoking not only improves your health but also saves you money. Here's how:

- **Saving on cigarettes (or vape devices):** Calculate how much you spend on cigarettes each week, month, and year. Imagine what you could do with that extra money if you stopped spending it on cigarettes.
- **Potential healthcare cost savings:** Quitting smoking can lead to fewer health problems and lower healthcare costs in the long run. By prioritising your health, you're likely to spend less money on doctor visits, medication, and treatments for smoking-related illnesses.

## REFERENCES

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*The information is shared on condition that readers will make their own determination, including seeking advice from a professional. E&OE.*



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