



Freyja Medical Clinic

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It's Time to Quit Smoking

Quitting smoking can be very hard, but more than 3 million Americans quit each year. You can do it, too. Smoking is a leading cause of death. In fact, a woman who smokes cigarettes shortens her life by five to eight years. Smoking increases a woman's risk of cancer, heart disease and reproductive problems.

About Cigarettes and Smoking

With each puff of a cigarette, a smoker's body is exposed to more than 2,500 chemicals. Many of these chemicals are known to cause cancer. For instance, cigarettes contain:

- Nicotine — a highly addictive drug
- Carbon monoxide — the poisonous gas in car exhaust fumes
- Tar — a gummy substance used to pave roads
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Smoking is the most preventable cause of illness and death. It doubles the risk of heart disease and cancer of the cervix in women.

Smoking is linked with reproductive problems such as infertility and early menopause.

How Can I Quit?

Here are some ways to help you quit smoking for good.

Getting Started

Follow these steps to help you get started:

- Decide that you want to quit.
- Focus on your reasons for quitting.
- Tell your family and friends that you plan to stop smoking. Get their support.
- Know what to expect when you quit.
- Set a target date for quitting.

Nicotine Replacement Products

To help you quit, you may want to try nicotine replacement products.

Nicotine replacement products release nicotine into your body. This can provide relief of cravings and withdrawal symptoms while you get used to life without smoking.

You can buy some of these products over-the-counter. Others may require a prescription.

You should never smoke when using nicotine replacement products. It could cause a stroke or heart problems.

If you smoke and are pregnant or breastfeeding, ask your doctor to help you quit smoking.

Nicotine Replacement Products

Patch

Gum

Inhaler

Nasal Spray



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Other Products

Another product your doctor may suggest to help you quit smoking is bupropion hydrochloride tablets. These tablets are antidepressants and must be prescribed by your doctor. Side effects of this medication include dry mouth, trouble sleeping, feeling shaky and skin rash.

Quitting Day

When the target date comes, throw away all your cigarettes. Clean your clothes to get rid of the cigarette smell.

Try to keep busy on your quitting day — exercise, go to the movies, or take long walks.

After You Quit Smoking

Once you stop smoking, there will be times when you feel you must have a cigarette. When you feel these urges, take steps to control them. Intense cravings only last a short time.

If you have a cigarette, don't be too hard on yourself. One slip doesn't mean you've failed.

If you feel you need extra help, ask for it.

Rewards of Quitting

When you quit smoking, the benefits start right away. Quitting reverses much of the damage caused by smoking.

Effects of Quitting

The first week after quitting is the hardest time. You may feel irritable, anxious and hungry. You may have trouble sleeping. You may feel dizzy or drowsy and have headaches.

These feelings are known as withdrawal symptoms. Withdrawal symptoms may begin within a few hours, peak in two to three days, and last up to a month.

What About Weight Gain?

Many people who are thinking about quitting worry about gaining weight. Keep in mind that the benefits of quitting far outweigh the drawbacks of gaining a few pounds.

Finally ...

Your decision to quit smoking is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your family.