



Smoke Signals

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Remember the Date: Nov. 17, 2005

For most people, quitting is not the biggest challenge; it's staying quit. The final key to successful quitting is being prepared to handle difficult situations and to recover if you slip.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, you are at greatest risk for relapse in the first three months after quitting. Plan ways you can cope when you are around other smokers or in difficult situations where you're tempted to take a puff.

If you used to smoke to handle stress or calm your nerves, it's important to find other ways to do that because stressful things will always happen sooner or later. Try to integrate stress reduction into your daily life. Some people find it helpful to meditate, to do yoga or tai chi, or to go for a run.

If you do slip and have a smoke, don't beat yourself up, and don't give up. Instead, think of what you can learn from this. Review what led you to smoke. Were you alone, or with others? How were you feeling before and after that cigarette? Did something happen that triggered the slip, such as a stressful time at work or a family fight?

Was the trigger a time or place you used to smoke: drinking in a bar, driving in the car, talking on the phone? Plan how you'll avoid or cope with that the next time. Ask for help from friends or experts.

Limit or monitor your use of coffee and alcohol; these trigger the urge to smoke for many people. Eat healthy foods and get some exercise to manage your weight and moods. Just walking for ten minutes three times a day can do it.

While some people do gain weight when they quit smoking, research shows that large weight changes are unusual. Using medication also helps limit weight gain.

Remind yourself of the benefits of not smoking. Think about smoother skin and healthy lungs. Picture yourself not smoking at important events such as your friend's wedding, your family reunion.

How much do you depend on nicotine?

The Stop Smoking Quiz

*can help you understand your smoking habits,
and how to use that knowledge
to create a personal quit plan.*

Go to www.cancer.org to take the quiz.

Helpful Tips: Most cigarette cravings only last a few minutes. And over time, the cravings come less often and farther apart.

Research shows that counseling - including telephone counseling - can help you quit. And the more intensive counseling you get, the more effective it's likely to be.

FREE

**FreshStart Smoking Cessation
Classes for St. Luke's
employees and volunteers**

7 p.m. Tuesdays

**Aug. 23, Aug. 30, Sept. 6 and Sept. 13
in the boardroom**

call 894-2408 to register