NHS
Yorkshire
Smokefree service

My Smokefree action plan

With **all of us** in mind.

Introduction

How this booklet will help you

Stopping smoking is a process with three steps:

Step 1: Preparing to stop
Step 2: Stopping
Step 3: Staying stopped

Your personal action plan will take you through these stages. Having a plan makes it easier to quit and stay stopped.

How you can help yourself

- **Be positive** – feel good about yourself for choosing not to smoke
  - » Better health
  - » Being free of an addiction
  - » Feeling in control rather than being controlled
  - » Not feeling deprived
- **Be prepared** – prepare for difficult situations which may weaken your desire to be smokefree
- **Be confident** – believe that you can and will!
- **Be determined** – refuse to take another drag of a cigarette as it will reawaken your craving for nicotine.

Step one: Preparing to stop

The more time and effort you put into the preparing stage, the easier stopping will be. These activities will make it easier for you to stop.

1. Setting a quit date
2. Assessing the pros and cons of stopping
3. Getting support from others
4. Learning from previous quit attempts
5. Being prepared for difficult situations
6. Identifying rewards for stopping
7. Using stop smoking products

Setting a quit date

My quit date is: . . . . . .

The pros and cons of stopping smoking

What will you lose by stopping smoking?

Write down your main concerns.

1. . . . . .

2. . . . . .

3. . . . . .

Write down 3 most important reasons for stopping.

1. . . . . .

2. . . . . .

3. . . . . .

Look at the two lists and decide which is more important to you.
By realising how much you will gain from being a non-smoker, you will find it easier to get through stopping smoking.

The benefits of stopping smoking

It's important to remember why you've decided to stop smoking as it can help keep you focussed on staying smokefree. There are many health and social benefits to stopping smoking which will be personal to you.

Carbon monoxide

Every time you come to an appointment we will ask you to blow into a carbon monoxide (CO) monitor. CO is a poisonous gas found in cigarette smoke. It stops the blood taking up oxygen from the lungs meaning that the organs in the body get less oxygen. This is the element that is most dangerous to your health.

The good news is that within 24 hours of not smoking the CO levels go back to the level of a non-smoker.

Many people when they stop smoking notice improvements in their health:

- Less breathless
- More energy
- Better concentration
- Healthier skin and hair
- Easier to walk
- As well as extra cash!

Make your home and car smokefree

- Creating smokefree spaces will make it easier for you to stop smoking
- Ask visitors to smoke outside and don't allow smoking in your car
- When others breathe in secondhand smoke it can damage their health too
- Speak to your advisor for more information

A little help from your friends and family

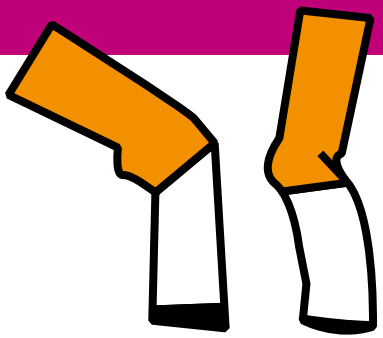
Who will help you through the difficult times? They must genuinely want to support you. Suggest how they can help you, for example:

- Not smoke in front of you
- Keep telling you that that you are doing the right thing
- Do things with you to help keep you busy

Tips

People sometimes don't like to see someone succeed in achieving something, especially some smokers who have tried to stop in the past. They may feel threatened by you stopping smoking.

You may find it easier to only tell people who genuinely want you to succeed. If someone does offer you a cigarette, simply say, "No thanks, I've just put one out" or "I don't feel like one at the moment" or "I'm cutting down". Remember that just one drag on a cigarette will reawaken your cravings for a cigarette.



If you've stopped smoking in the past...

It's useful to look back to see what worked well and helped you quit and what you will do differently this time.

What worked well and helped you to stay stopped?

What made you start smoking again?

What will you do differently this time?

How confident are you?

On the following scale how confident are you that you will stop smoking this time:

1 = Not confident 5 = Confident 9 = Very confident

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐

What can you do to increase your confidence?

Being prepared for difficult situations

What makes you want to smoke? Typical 'triggers' are:

- First thing in the morning
- After meals
- Seeing others smoke
- Coffee, tea, alcohol
- Stress
- Boredom

Managing your triggers

Some ways of coping with difficult situations:

» Stay busy

» Think about something else

» Take a few slow, deep breaths

» Have a glass of water

» Talk to other people – get help and support from people who understand

» Remember your reasons for quitting

» Don't fear cravings, they're a normal part of quitting. When you learn to deal with them it'll be easier to stay stopped

» Look at the 'Choosing Routine' (page 8)

Write down your own ideas to deal with your triggers.

The Choosing Routine

1. I have a desire to smoke
This is understandable. I have been a smoker for many years.

2. I am free to choose
I can take the desire away with a cigarette, OR I can accept the desire

3. Now I will make my choice . . .

I choose to return to smoking

OR

I choose to accept this desire rather than smoke

Reward Yourself

Smokers often use cigarettes to reward themselves. This might be for a job well done, getting through a crisis, or getting through a stressful day. When you stop smoking it's helpful to find new ways to reward yourself.

A reward doesn't have to cost anything, it could be about spending time with others, going for a walk, or giving your time back to help someone.

Rewards are something that give you pleasure and help you feel good about yourself. Build these into your day to day routine and plan for further ahead to help you stay smokefree.

List rewards for reaching the following stages:

The day you quit

. . . . . .

One week

. . . . . .

Two weeks

. . . . . .

Three weeks

. . . . . .

One month

. . . . . .

Three months

. . . . . .

Six months

. . . . . .

One year

. . . . . .

Stop Smoking Products

There are lots of different products to help you quit. You will discuss all the options available with your stop smoking advisor.

Using a stop smoking product will help you manage nicotine withdrawal symptoms and make quitting and staying stopped much easier.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

- This includes products like patches, lozenges, gum, inhalators and mouth spray
- These products are very effective in helping smokers to stop
- They have been tested and regulated so are very safe to use
- Few side effects
- Different strengths of nicotine to make it easier for you to get the right amount of nicotine to help keep you comfortable and manage withdrawal symptoms
- NRT is normally used for at least 8 weeks

Prescription – Only Medicines

There are three prescription-only stop smoking medicines, which are in tablet form:

- Varenicline
- Bupropion (brand name Zyban)
- Cytisinicline

These medicines do not contain any nicotine, but they can help with withdrawal symptoms.

These medications can be prescribed by your local stop smoking service or via request from the GP. For more information and availability of these products, please contact your local stop smoking service.

E-cigarettes (Vapes)

You might decide you want to quit using an e-cigarette. We can help you with that. Vapes are electronic devices that let you inhale nicotine in a vapour rather than through smoke. This is done by heating a solution (E-Liquid) which comes in different nicotine strengths and flavours.

For more information on vapes and what is available in your area, please contact your advisor.

Managing withdrawal symptom

You may have withdrawal symptoms during the first 2 – 3 weeks of stopping smoking. Most decrease during the first week, gradually easing during the following weeks. Symptoms are normal, harmless and temporary and a sign that your body is repairing itself. Using stop smoking products can help ease withdrawal symptoms.

Symptoms	What's happening	How to manage them
Desire to smoke	Brain is missing the nicotine fix	This goes after a few weeks. See page 4-5 for ways to cope.
Cough, dry mouth, nasal drip	Lungs are clearing of tar and mucous	Improves quickly, warm drinks might help
Hunger	Cravings for nicotine can be confused with hunger pangs, missing having something in the mouth	Drink water or low calorie drinks. Snack on fruit and raw veg. Try sugar-free gum.
Constipation, upset stomach	Lack of nicotine to act on stimulating the bowel	Drink plenty of fluids, eat fruit, vegetables and high fibre foods.
Dizziness	Brain is getting extra oxygen	Should stop after a few days. Use relaxation methods
Feeling tired and trouble sleeping	Lack of nicotine in the brain to act as a stimulant	Have a sleep routine to help relax and wind down. Get more fresh air and exercise during the day. Cut down on tea and coffee
Trouble concentrating	Body needs time to readjust to not having a constant supply of nicotine	Take a break, make lists and plans to keep you on track. Try to avoid or manage stress
Changes in mood, irritability, depression	The body is missing its buzz from nicotine. You might feel like you've lost a 'friend'	Do something to lift your mood, talk to family and friends. Build in rewards – see page 9 and look at 5 ways to well-being advice. See your GP if depression persists

Using stop smoking products will help ease withdrawal symptoms

Preparing for the day you quit

1. **Avoid temptation**
   - Choose a quit day that's unlikely to be stressful
   - Avoid being around other smokers
   - Get rid of your tobacco and lighters
   - Review your triggers

2. **Get support**
   - Family and friends
   - Work colleagues
   - Yorkshire Smokefree: 0800 612 0011 (free from landlines) or 0330 660 1166 (free from most mobiles)
   - On-line support: www.yorkshiresmokefree.nhs.uk
   - Who else could support you?

     . . . . . .

     . . . . . .

     . . . . . .

3. **Remind yourself why you're quitting**
   - Look at your list of reasons on page 3.

4. **Get your stop smoking products ready to use**

5. **Be committed to stopping smoking completely**

Remember – there's never 'just one' cigarette

Stopping smoking – Your quit day and beyond

Things to do on your quit day

- Change your usual routines
- Have breakfast, plan some snacks and drink plenty of water
- Keep busy, have activities that will distract you
- Avoid being around smokers and smoking areas
- Avoid alcohol as it lowers your determination to stay stopped

Coping with urges to smoke

- Tell yourself that the urge will go away in about five minutes
- Managing urges gets easier every time
- Remind yourself why you are quitting
- Avoid your most difficult triggers
- Practice the four Ds: Do something; deep Breathing; distract yourself; drink water

Change the way you think about smoking

- Take one day at a time, one urge at a time and don't worry about tomorrow, next week, or next month
- Remind yourself that one drag of a cigarette can reawaken your desire to smoke and lead you back to smoking again
- Realise that you're choosing not to smoke. It's your choice.

During the first week

1. Put your quit plan into action
2. Avoid your most difficult triggers
3. Practice your new routines
4. Distract yourself, keep busy, go for a walk
5. Use your stop smoking products to help manage your withdrawal symptoms
6. Some people feel worse before they feel better, this is normal and is just the body repairing itself after years of smoking
7. Celebrate each day you don't smoke and reward yourself
8. Eat a healthy diet

Learning to staying stopped

Congratulations on stopping smoking! You've worked hard to get to this stage and now you need to protect all the changes you've made so you stay smokefree for good.

Nicotine withdrawal

At this stage most people are feeling more comfortable not smoking and having less urges to smoke. The longer you stay completely smokefree the easier it becomes to stay stopped.

Continue using your stop smoking products until you have completed the course.

Tempting triggers

These can come back at any time when you least expect it so be prepared!

- Anticipate triggers before they arise (look back at page 7 to see your triggers)
- Plan coping strategies and use the Choosing Routine (page 8)
- Memorise your coping strategies so they become second nature

It's good to feel confident about staying stopped but don't think about 'testing' yourself by having a drag of a cigarette. Remember – there's never 'just one' cigarette.

Psychological dependence

The habit of smoking over many years can leave you feeling like something is missing from your life. You may miss smoking and the social side of having a cigarette.

- Remember your reasons for quitting
- Look back at your rewards and make sure you do what you've planned
- Think about the benefits you've got now you're not smoking
- Stay positive and look back on all the times you haven't smoked

Thinking about smoking constantly

It's normal to look back and think of the times when you enjoyed smoking and see it as a pleasure that you now miss.

- Remind yourself what you hated about smoking (such as the smell, the cost, the coughing)
- Take each day at a time, you could just be having a bad day
- Remind yourself why you wanted to quit in the first place

If you do smoke a cigarette . . .

If you slip up and smoke a cigarette it doesn't have to mean that you're smoking again. Get back on track, look back at your quit plan and plan new strategies for dealing with the trigger that led to the slip.

If you've had several cigarettes . . .

This doesn't make you a smoker again. Learn from the experience to prevent further slip-ups and review your reasons for quitting. However, you are really vulnerable to going back to smoking your usual amount so think about setting a new quit day in the near future and plan how you are going to get through that first day again.

Preventing slip-ups . . .

- Everytime you cope with a challenging situation you are becoming more in control of your smoking habits.
- Some situations are easier to cope with whilst others continue to remain strong triggers. This is more to do with how you feel at the time and attitude towards the situation rather than a craving for nicotine.
- Look back on all the times you haven't smoked - why was that, what did you do, what were you thinking, what was helpful?

Use the Choosing Routine (see page 8)

What to do if you live with a smoker

Let them know you're serious about quitting and that their support is important to you. Say what support you would like, such as:

- Make your home smokefree
- Keep cigarettes out of sight
- Agree not to smoke in front of you or offer you a cigarette
- Respect your decision to quit

Weight gain when stopping smoking

Weight gain is common after stopping smoking. On average smokers gain 4.7kg (around 10lbs) in the first year after quitting.

Some reasons why this happens:

- Smoking supresses the appetite
- Nicotine speeds up the metabolism so you burn calories quicker
- Taste and smell improves after quitting
- Food might be used as a distraction and to manage cravings
- Food can replace the 'hand to mouth' action of smoking

Things you can do to keep weight gain to a minimum:

- Increase your exercise (use the Quit to Get Fit vouchers which you'll get when you've not smoked for four weeks)
- Have healthy snacks ready to deal with hunger pangs
- Eat smaller portions of food and chew your food well

- Use your stop smoking products to supress cravings so you can focus on staying stopped
- Ask your stop smoking advisor for information about other services that can help you manage your weight in the future

Managing stress

Exercise is a great alternative to smoking, it can help you:

- Rid your body of nicotine
- Keep your mind off smoking
- Improve your health
- Help you relax
- Reduce stress
- Control your weight

Remember to ask your stop smoking advisor for the Quit to Get Fit vouchers when you've not smoked for four weeks.

Managing boredom

Many smokers say they smoke more when they're bored. Stopping smoking will 'free up' time so if you don't do other things cravings for cigarettes may creep back in.

One useful way of helping to manage cravings and distract yourself could be to use the **Five Ways to Wellbeing**. These are five simple steps that can be incorporated into everyday activities. They have been shown to help people feel happier and more positive about their life and may also help manage stress and anxiety.

The 5 steps are:

Connect – with family, friends and colleagues. Have regular contact with the people who have agreed to support you stop smoking.

Be active – physical activity helps manage cravings for cigarettes and control weight gain. It can also help improve sleep, stress and worries and distracts from others things going on in our lives.

Take notice – be aware of your surroundings and what's going on around you. Notice if your sense of taste and smell are returning since stopping smoking.

Keep learning – learning something new enhances self-esteem and impacts positively on wellbeing. Find some self-help books to support you staying smoke free and manage stress. Take up a new hobby or craft to occupy your mind with things other than smoking.

Give – do something nice for someone else, helping and sharing helps you feel good about yourself. Attend the stop smoking sessions and share your experiences of stopping smoking and support others.

Relaxation techniques can help too

Here are some techniques to try:

- **Deep breathing** – breathe in slowly, count to five, and hold for a few seconds. Breathe out slowly whilst counting to five. Repeat.
- **Mental relaxation** – close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, imagine yourself in a calm peaceful place. When you feel relaxed open your eyes.
- **Muscle relaxation** – Get into a comfortable position and starting with your toes, tighten your muscles for three seconds and release. Work up your body tightening and releasing your muscles. Stay still for a while before getting up.
- **Other ways to relax** – Listen to music, have a warm bath, and do some light stretches.

Sources of help to manage stress

- Your GP
- Ask your stop smoking advisor for details of local services that can help you with managing stress

Contact details

Call **0800 612 0011** (free from landlines)

or **0330 660 1166** (free from most mobiles)

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