

# Great American Smokeout®

## Behavior Change

### *Thinking about quitting smoking?*

#### **Help for Cravings and Tough Situations**

##### *What to do right now to create a smoke-free future*

- For the first few days after you quit, spend as much free time as possible in places where smoking is prohibited, such as libraries, museums, theaters, or churches.
- If you miss the feeling of having a cigarette in your hand, play with something else like a pencil, a paper clip, or a marble.
- Avoid temptation by staying away from situations you associate with pleasurable smoking.
- Remember your goal and the fact that the urge will eventually pass.
- Find new habits, and create a nonsmoking environment around you.
- Anticipate future situations/crises that might make you want to smoke again, and remind yourself of your reasons not to give in.
- Reward yourself. Plan to do something fun for doing your best.

##### *When you get a sudden urge or craving*

- Brush your teeth.
- Take deep rhythmic breaths, similar to those you take while smoking, to relax.
- Think positive thoughts, and avoid negative ones.
- Do brief bursts of exercise, like isometrics, pushups, deep knee bends, a walk up a flight of stairs.
- Call a supportive friend.
- Strike up a conversation instead of a match for a cigarette

##### *Change your eating and drinking habits*

- Drink a lot of water and 100 percent fruit juice.
- Don't drink alcohol, coffee, or other beverages that you associate with smoking.
- If you miss the feeling of having something in your mouth, try toothpicks, cinnamon sticks, or celery.
- Eat several small meals instead of one or two large ones. This maintains constant blood sugar levels and helps prevent the urge to smoke.
- Avoid sugary or spicy foods that trigger a desire for cigarettes.

##### *When you get the "crazies"*

- Keep oral substitutes handy: carrots, pickles, apples, celery, raisins, and gum.
- Take 10 deep breaths, and hold the last one while lighting a match. Exhale slowly and blow out the match. Pretend it is a cigarette, and put it out in an ashtray.
- Take a shower or bath, if possible.
- Learn to relax quickly and deeply. Make yourself limp, visualize a soothing and pleasing situation, and get away from it all for a moment. Concentrate on that peaceful image and nothing else.
- Light incense or a candle, instead of a cigarette.
- Tell yourself "no." Say it out loud. Practice doing this a few times, and listen to yourself. Some other things you can say to yourself might be, "I'm too strong to give in to smoking," "I'm a nonsmoker now," or "I don't want to let my friends and family down."
- Never allow yourself to think that "one won't hurt," because it will.

American Cancer Society. Quitting Smoking – Help For Cravings and Tough Situations. [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)



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