

MEDfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health®



Challenging Roadblocks to Quitting Tobacco

Below is a list of common roadblocks to quitting smoking/tobacco. The trick is learning how to challenge or look at them in a new way. Fears or doubts do not need to hold you back.

Fear of Failure

Are you afraid that if you try and fail that this means you will never succeed?

Challenge this fear: The fact is that people who quit more often are more likely to be successful. NOT that those that fail a few times never become non-smokers! Think of other things you have learned to do in your life – were you good at it the first time you did it? More than likely you had to practice before you were good at it.

Withdrawal Symptoms

Many people fear [withdrawal symptoms](#). They fear that uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms will never go away.

Challenge this fear: Although it varies from person to person, all withdrawal symptoms get better over time. The fact is that fatigue, irritability, cravings and loss of concentration go away the longer you are a non-smoker. There are new [quit smoking medicines](#) available to ease withdrawal symptoms. You may not yet have found the right quit plan for you!

Weight Gain

Many people fear weight gain.

Challenge this fear: The majority of people who quit gain only five to eight pounds. Some people do gain more. But, some people do not. Once you have quit, you will have better lung function and a greater feeling of fitness. You can walk more. You can exercise longer. You will have a much better chance of losing weight once you become a non-smoker.

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Depression

Some people fear feeling down or blue after quitting. Smoking or tobacco use may feel like a friend or like a very rewarding activity.

Challenge this fear: Is tobacco the only way to cope with feeling down or blue? Are there new hobbies that could replace the rewards of smoking? Some smokers need extra social support from others who are quitting. You can explore getting more support from other avenues to get the encouragement you need. Think of how proud you will feel when you have become a non-smoker! If you feel depressed and it doesn't go away, you can talk to your doctor to get help. Tobacco use doesn't cure depression. There may be new, healthier ways to make yourself feel better that you have not yet explored!

Enjoyment of Tobacco

Some people fear losing the enjoyable feeling from using tobacco. They fear they will always miss the pleasure they get from smoking or tobacco use.

Challenge this fear: Maybe there are other things that can replace the enjoyment you get from smoking or tobacco use. Some smokers find new hobbies such as walking, gardening, reading, golfing, bike riding or interacting with others online. These hobbies give them a new sense of enjoyment that can replace smoking. Maybe there is a hobby you can discover that gives you a new sense of fun and joy.

Lack of Support

Some people fear that they don't have enough support to help them through the quitting process.

Challenge this fear: Consider using a quitline service. Quitlines offer you telephone support over the phone by trained quit coaches.

Being Around Others Who Smoke

Some people fear being around other people who smoke. They fear they will never be able to be around other's who smoke.

Challenge this fear: Most people find that avoiding these situations in the early stages of quitting are helpful. This doesn't mean that you can never be around smokers. Actually, once you are a nonsmoker, you may find that you don't want to be around the smoke and may find other ways to engage with your friends and family.

Not Understanding Quitting Treatment Options

Some people fear that they don't know or understand all of the options that can help them quit.

Challenge this fear: Remember, knowledge is power. Find out what you don't know and ask your doctor your remaining questions. Learn about [smoking cessation medications and therapies](#).

Note: This information is provided to you as an educational service of LUNG LINE® (1-800-222-LUNG). It is not meant to be a substitute for consulting with your own physician.

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