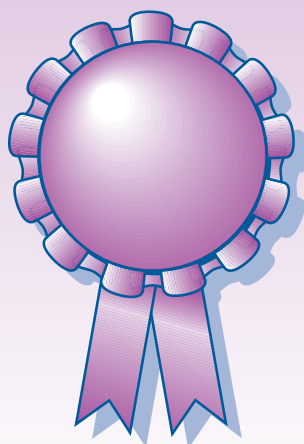


# S

# PECIAL SITUATIONS

- **STRESS MANAGEMENT**
- **WEIGHT MANAGEMENT**
- **WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS**
- **ROUTINES**
- **MEALS AND COFFEE**
- **ALCOHOL AND SOCIALIZING**
- **BEING AROUND SMOKERS**



**THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**  
**National Smoking Cessation**  
**Specialist Certification Program**

# STRESS MANAGEMENT



Like many people, you may feel that smoking a cigarette helps you to beat stress.

You may be surprised to find out that the nicotine in cigarettes is actually a stimulant that makes your heart beat faster and increases your blood pressure!

So, why do many smokers feel more calm and relaxed when they smoke? This is caused by a combination of three things:

- If you are a smoker, your body is “used to” a certain amount of nicotine. When your nicotine level drops below that amount, you feel uncomfortable. Then, when you put more nicotine into your body, you “feel better” — not because your problems are gone, but simply because nicotine is back in your bloodstream.
- If you are a smoker, you have probably smoked a cigarette so many times during stressful situations that you now connect the “feeling better” that nicotine brings about with feeling more relaxed and in control of your problems. You have actually trained yourself to believe that smoking a cigarette helps to make you calm and in-control.
- Each time you inhale while smoking a cigarette, you are taking deep slow breaths. Deep breathing in this way, with *or without* a cigarette, actually does help calm you.

So, as you smoke a cigarette, you breathe deeply and bring the nicotine level in your body back up to a certain level. You get a feeling that you are more relaxed, and you think that the cigarette has done this for you.

It is understandable that you are concerned that, by quitting smoking, you will lose your “relaxation tool” and will be overcome by stress.

**But it is very important to understand that YOU, NOT THE CIGARETTE, have always been the one doing the calming and relaxing!** A cigarette does not contain any ingredient that can relax you. It cannot pay your bills, make the traffic go any faster, or help you deal with your boss.

Smoking a cigarette has simply been your way of “setting the stage” for relaxing yourself and coping with stress. As you focus on quitting smoking, you simply need to find new ways to set the stage for relaxation and stress management. There are so many ways to do this!

And while you are at it, why not reduce the number of stressful situations in your life at the same time? You’ll find yourself enjoying your new smoke-free life even more!

The suggestions on the next pages give you some new ways to reduce stress and to deal with stressful situations in a healthy manner. *Give them a try!*

## REMEMBER:

A cigarette is only paper and dried-up leaves. It is not a magic wand! A cigarette has never solved your problems — you have done that yourself, and you can continue to do so without cigarettes.

## REDUCING THE STRESS IN YOUR LIFE

- Be sure to eat right, get plenty of sleep, and take part in some kind of exercise. If you do not exercise now, walking twenty minutes a day would be a good place to start. Talk with your doctor before beginning any exercise program.
- Focus on the good things in your life! Make a list of all the good things you have now. Look at the list when you become angry or upset.

## THESE THINGS MAKE MY LIFE GOOD!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- Learn to accept the things that you cannot change. Try to take one day at a time.
- If possible, put off any especially stressful tasks that you are facing until you have been smoke-free for several weeks.
- Set aside relaxation time each day. Purchase a relaxation or meditation tape or video; listen to music.

## STRESS HAPPENS...AND YOU CAN HANDLE IT!

- Write down the three things that cause the most stress in your life. Below each one, list some of the different ways you could handle it. Then decide which choice would be best, and place a check mark next to it. Be prepared to use this choice the next time you are faced with the stressful situation.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Handle by: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Handle by: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Handle by: \_\_\_\_\_

- Practice deep breathing throughout the day, especially during stressful times. Use a cinnamon stick or a straw, if you wish, to help draw in the air.
- Close your eyes and practice seeing yourself successfully handling a stressful situation without a cigarette. Make the picture as real as possible.
- Talk about stressful situations with friends or loved ones, to get suggestions from them about dealing with the problem at hand. Talk with a clergyman or a counselor if you feel it is necessary.
- Remind yourself that every problem has a solution *that does not involve smoking*.

## HANDLING TEMPTATIONS TO SMOKE DURING STRESSFUL TIMES

- Separate the cigarette from the situation. Think back to a recent stressful situation that you went through. Ask yourself what a cigarette could have done to make the situation any better.
- Step back, take a deep breath, and say to yourself, “I am in control” or “I can handle this.” Then deal with the problem.
- If you become angry or upset with someone, tell yourself, “If I smoke I am only hurting myself, not that person.” Remind yourself that smoking is not a good way to get back at anyone.
- Leave the room or setting if necessary.
- Distract yourself. Always have something to read or do with you. (Do a crossword puzzle, write your next shopping list, read a magazine, knit, etc.)

## RELAXATION TECHNIQUE

Taking some time to relax each day will reduce the stress in your life. It will also give you the energy to deal with problems when they do occur. Practice this simple routine for at least fifteen minutes each day. You will be surprised at how calm and refreshed you will feel!

### ***FIND***

a quiet place where no one will bother you.

### ***SIT***

in a comfortable chair or lie on the floor.

### ***THINK***

of a sound or a short word that you can say over and over to yourself.

### ***CLOSE***

your eyes.

### ***LET***

yourself relax.

### ***BEGIN***

to breathe deeply and slowly, taking the air in through your nose and letting it out through your mouth. As you do this, say your special word over and over to yourself.

### ***DO***

this for fifteen minutes each day.

### ***DON'T WORRY***

if you have trouble clearing your mind the first few times you do this.  
Just like everything else, it will become easier as you practice.

*Ask your pharmacist for any or all of these other specialized handouts for new non-smokers: Weight Management, Withdrawal Symptoms, Routines, Meals and Coffee, Alcohol and Socializing, Being Around Smokers.*

# WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Many people use possible weight gain as an excuse to continue smoking. But the fact is, the bad effects that smoking can have on your body are a high price to pay for keeping off a few pounds. Besides, the average weight gain after quitting smoking is only five to seven pounds! Most gainers can lose that amount of weight easily and keep it off.

It is important that you do not go on a diet until you are very comfortable with being a non-smoker. For most people, this means waiting about two to three months after quitting.

Quitting smoking and following a diet are two major changes in your life

—for best results, take on one at a time!

**In the meantime, here are some suggestions that will help you minimize weight gain.**

Don't feel you have to eat just because you are quitting smoking! Eat only when you are truly hungry, and keep plenty of sugarless gum, hard candy, or carrots on hand.

Drink six to eight glasses of water per day.

Begin a modest exercise program after consulting your physician. Try walking at a good pace for twenty to thirty minutes three days a week, and gradually increase the time or frequency as your fitness level increases.

Remind yourself that a few extra pounds are no big deal compared to the damage smoking was doing to your body.

If you watch what you eat all week, give yourself a treat on Sunday by allowing yourself freedom to eat what you want.

Sneak exercise into your day. Take the stairs, park your car a little further away, get up from your chair often, and take a walk on your break.

When you do snack, try to stick to pretzels, fruits and vegetables.

Eat five small meals per day instead of three big ones. This will help give you a steady amount of energy throughout the day and will keep you from feeling hungry.

Remember: You would have to gain more than 100 pounds before your weight would do the same damage to your body that smoking does!

Try exercise: It keeps your weight down and also lets your body release endorphins, substances that help you to relax.

# WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

If you experience physical or emotional changes while you're quitting, don't worry. While they may be annoying or frustrating, these changes are actually just signs that your body is healing itself. Your body is trying to adjust to the sudden disappearance of the chemicals it has been used to absorbing on a regular basis.

Keep in mind that these signs usually go away completely within a week or two. And in the meantime, nicotine replacement products can be used to help your body adjust.

*Some of the temporary changes you may notice are:*

## **TENSION, IRRITABILITY AND DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING**

These symptoms are usually the result of the drop in your body's nicotine level. If you are having problems with tension or irritability, think about starting nicotine replacement therapy. If you are already using a nicotine replacement product, ask your pharmacy if you might do better with a change in dosage.

Minor irritability and tension can be handled through stress management techniques, too. Ask your pharmacist for a handout on Stress Management.

## **DEPRESSION**

If you feel bad enough after quitting that you think the problem goes beyond just tension and irritability, see your doctor—especially if you have a family history or a personal history of depression.

## **COUGHING OR INCREASED MUCUS**

Your cilia (little “brushes” in your respiratory system that sweep dust particles away from your lungs) are paralyzed when you smoke. Once you stop smoking, they become active again, and they work overtime to get rid of any mucus or tar lodged in your lungs. Generally this is most noticeable right after you quit. It is accompanied by coughing, and lasts for about a month or two. All you can do is be patient and let your body do its cleanup work! In the meantime, hot liquids and lozenges may help relieve your cough.

## **DISRUPTED SLEEP PATTERNS**

You may become very tired — or very energetic — once you quit. If you are tired, take naps when possible and try to get plenty of sleep each night. If you can't sleep, try relaxation and deep breathing techniques. If those don't work, take advantage of the extra time and take care of any projects you've been putting off!

In either case, your sleep patterns will probably return to normal in a week or two.

*Ask your pharmacist for any or all of these other specialized handouts for new non-smokers: Stress Management, Weight Management, Routines, Meals and Coffee, Alcohol and Socializing, Being Around Smokers.*

# ROUTINES

## BREAKING THE CIGARETTE LINK

Each time you smoke a cigarette, you unconsciously link the cigarette with whatever else you are doing — such as talking on the telephone, sitting at the table after a meal, having a cup of coffee, or reading a book.

After smoking for years and years, these links become very strong. Simply picking up the telephone, finishing a meal, reaching for the coffee pot, or opening a book may make you feel like you want to smoke.

Breaking these links is a very important part of quitting smoking! The good news is that you do not have to change your life forever, or even for a long time, to successfully break these links. Changing your schedule for just two or three weeks can do it.

It is important that you change as many of the situations as possible that link your life to cigarettes!

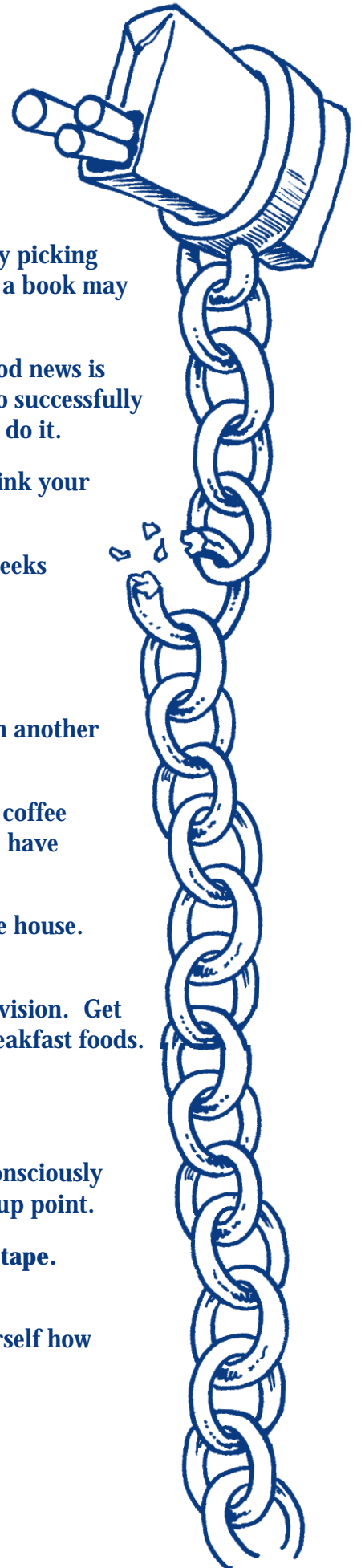
Here are some specific times of your day, and what you can do for a few weeks (or longer if you like!) during those times to break the cigarette link:

### IN THE MORNING

- **As soon as you get up**, tell yourself how exciting it will be to go through another day without cigarettes.
- **Change the order of your morning routine.** If you usually have your coffee before you shower, shower first. If you usually shave before breakfast, have breakfast first, etc.
- **Change where you do things.** Have breakfast in a different part of the house. Get dressed in a different room.
- **Change what you do.** Listen to the radio instead of turning on the television. Get up ten minutes earlier, or later. Eat a smaller breakfast, or try new breakfast foods.

### IN THE CAR

- **Choose a slightly different route for routine trips.** Many people unconsciously light a cigarette at the same stop sign, traffic light, or daily traffic backup point.
- **Listen to a talk radio station, a book-on-tape, or a positive thinking tape.** This will help keep your mind occupied.
- **If an urge to smoke does hit you**, take a deep breath and remind yourself how happy you are to be a nonsmoker.
- **Remove cigarettes from your car, and clean out the ashtrays.**



## AT WORK

- **Change your work environment as much as you can.** Change the placement of items on top of your desk or in your work station. Put up motivational notes or a No Smoking sign as a reminder of your commitment.
- **Keep busy during breaks.** Do puzzles or word games, plan activities, straighten up your work area, or read. Take a walk if you can. Make a list of the things you'll do with the money you'll save each month by not smoking!
- **Stay away from the smoking room or area.**
- **Avoid taking your breaks at the same time as your smoking friends.**
- **Realize that you do not need a cigarette or anything else as an excuse to take a break.** You deserve it!

## AT LUNCHTIME

- **Try having lunch with nonsmoking coworkers** in the nonsmoking section of the dining room or a restaurant.
- **Avoid sitting around the table after a meal.** Get up and brush your teeth if possible. Carry a small tube of toothpaste and a toothbrush with you at all times.

## ON THE TELEPHONE

- **Speak while standing instead of sitting.**
- **Move the location of your telephone if you can.**
- **Make sure there are no cigarettes within reach of your telephone.**

## IN THE EVENING

- **Limit the time you spend at home “doing nothing.”**
- **If you are watching television, do crossword puzzles or read a magazine at the same time.**
- **Keep yourself busy.** Do the projects you have been putting off.
- **Begin a volunteer position or a hobby.**
- **Begin an exercise program after consulting your doctor.** Walking briskly each night for twenty minutes or so may be a good way to start.
- **Keep a Quitting Calendar.** Each night before you go to bed, mark off another day of being a nonsmoker. Say to yourself, “I’m proud that I made it through another day without smoking!”  
(See next page.)

# MY QUITTING CALENDAR

MONTH #1 \_\_\_\_\_

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		

MONTH #2 \_\_\_\_\_

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		

MONTH #3 \_\_\_\_\_

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		

## BEING PREPARED

Take a few minutes to write down the three times when you are most likely to think about smoking. Then decide what you will do to eliminate the temptation to smoke in each of those situations. Be prepared to put your plan into action the next time you are in one of these situations.

1. Situation : \_\_\_\_\_

My coping plan: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

My coping plan: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

My coping plan: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Ask your pharmacist for any or all of these other specialized handouts for new non-smokers: Stress Management, Weight Management, Withdrawal Symptoms, Meals and Coffee, Alcohol and Socializing, Being Around Smokers.*

# MEALS AND COFFEE

Smoking after meals is hard to resist for many people. Many also find that drinking coffee—with or without a meal—makes them think about smoking a cigarette. Here are some tips to help you beat temptation by temporarily changing your eating and drinking habits.

Once you have successfully quit smoking, you will be able to resume your old habits if you like—but many people find that they continue using some of the tips here because they enjoy them.



- In restaurants, always sit in the non-smoking section.
- Don't linger at the table after a meal. Get up immediately and, if you can, brush your teeth.
- If you're using Nicorette gum, have a piece ready for after a meal.
- Carry a small tube of toothpaste and a toothbrush with you at all times so you can brush at restaurants. If brushing is not possible, have a mint or gargle with mouthwash.
- Take a short walk when you are done eating.
- If you're eating alone, keep your mind busy by reading.
- Tell yourself, "I am strong enough to get through this meal without smoking!" and repeat as needed.
- Change your brand of coffee or drink a flavored coffee for a few weeks.
- Try drinking tea instead of coffee.

*Ask your pharmacist for any or all of these other specialized handouts for new non-smokers: Stress Management, Weight Management, Withdrawal Symptoms, Routines, Alcohol and Socializing, Being Around Smokers.*



# ALCOHOL AND SOCIALIZING

You are at a party. It's been a week since you've quit smoking. You're enjoying your favorite drink and your favorite people's company, having a great time, not even thinking about cigarettes.

A couple hours later a good friend arrives, and she's smoking. By now you are on your fourth drink. While she is talking to you, all you notice is her cigarette. You begin to think how good one would taste with your drink. You know that she would give you one if you'd just ask. The more you think about it, the stronger the urge becomes.

**Sound familiar?** Whether it is at a party, a bar, or some other social gathering spot, many people slip back into smoking while drinking alcohol during the first few weeks after they quit.

The link between alcohol and smoking can be very strong. Alcohol reduces your control over your actions. And cigarettes are usually readily available at bars and parties.

The best advice here is to avoid social gatherings where alcohol will be served, for at least two or three weeks. Explore other ways to socialize with your friends.

However, if you do choose to go out to these types of gatherings, here are some tips to help you deal with the tempting situations that are likely to arise:

- **At home, develop and practice coping techniques to help you handle yourself.** For example, practice saying out loud, "No, thanks, I don't smoke," just in case someone offers you a cigarette. Make a commitment to yourself not to ask anyone for a cigarette.
- **If you have an urge to smoke, say to yourself, "I can make it," and think about something else.**
- **Go to the event with nonsmoking friends.** Have a friend with you that you can talk to if you have an urge to smoke.
- **Consider not drinking alcohol.** Or, if you do choose to drink, limit yourself to two drinks.
- **Change from what you usually drink.** If you always have beer, drink wine instead. Changing from the brand of beer or liquor you generally drink will also help you to break the liquor and cigarette link.
- **Before you go, decide to leave the event from time to time to get some fresh air.**
- **If you are using Nicorette gum, make sure to have an adequate supply with you.** Instead of having a cigarette, use a piece of Nicorette if the urge to smoke hits you.

*Ask your pharmacist for any or all of these other specialized handouts for new non-smokers: Stress Management, Weight Management, Withdrawal Symptoms, Routines, Meals and Coffee, Being Around Smokers.*

# BEING AROUND SMOKERS

## WHEN THERE'S A SMOKER IN THE HOUSE

Yes, it is definitely possible to quit smoking even though someone else in your household smokes.

The key is to work together. If you make angry demands of your spouse or housemate or set up impossible rules, he or she will probably not follow them and may even try to wreck your attempt to stay away from cigarettes.

But if you show that you are willing to be respectful of your spouse's or housemate's need to smoke and expect him or her to be just as respectful of your desire to quit, together you can make the situation work. Agree to openly discuss any problems you may be having with quitting. The smoker may just be able to help you find a solution.

**The following suggestions are designed to respect the needs and feelings of the smoker in your house, while giving you the best possible environment in which to quit.**

- Ask the smoker never to smoke in front of you or offer you a cigarette.
- Discuss the possibility that he or she might like to quit with you — but do not force the issue.
- Limit smoking to one or two rooms in the house, or to outside areas.
- Give the smoker one ashtray. Ask him or her to keep this ashtray clean and out of your sight.
- Have your spouse or housemate keep his or her cigarettes where you will not be able to find them.
- Set a length of time for these changes — for example, three weeks or one month.
- Offer to do something special in exchange for this cooperation. A special dinner might be nice!



# WHEN OTHERS SMOKE

Your family members and good friends who smoke are likely to support you, at least to some extent, in your efforts to quit. But strangers, coworkers, and not-so-good friends may present a bigger challenge. If these people continue to smoke around you, your main coping techniques will be ones that help you change how you think about the situation. If you do choose to confront these smokers, do so with tact and understanding.

## **What can you do if people around you are smoking?**

- Remind yourself of the reasons that you quit.
- Feel sorry for people who still smoke. They are “slaves to the cigarette.”
- Say to yourself, “I’m proud that I quit,” or “I am in control.”
- Politely tell the smokers that you have recently quit and that it would help you if they did not smoke around you.
- Distract yourself. Always have something to do or read just in case you run into a smoker.
- Leave the scene if you need to.

## **What can you do if someone offers you a cigarette without realizing that you have quit?**

- At home, stand in front of a mirror and practice saying, “No thank you. I don’t smoke anymore.” Do this until you get used to saying it and the words come out easily. Practicing like this will make it easier to do when the situation actually comes up.
- Do not use the offer of a cigarette as an excuse to smoke.
- Avoid places where you know people are smoking.

## **What can you do if someone starts to tease you or deliberately tempt you by waving cigarettes in front of you or blowing smoke in your face?**

- Politely explain to the person that you are trying to quit, and ask them to stop.
- Avoid giving in to these games. Remember, most people who would do this sort of thing are just jealous that you have been able to quit. If you smoke, they win. Do you really want that?
- Say to yourself, “I am strong enough to get through this.”
- Leave the scene as soon as possible and do something else.
- Think about the people you know. If you suspect one or more of them would do this to you, stay away from them until you feel strong enough to deal with the situation.

*Ask your pharmacist for any or all of these other specialized handouts for new non-smokers: Stress Management, Weight Management, Withdrawal Symptoms, Routines, Meals and Coffee, Alcohol and Socializing.*