



Tips to help you stop smoking for good

Are you thinking about stopping smoking - but need a little incentive to make the move?

If you do, then [Stoptober](#) could be just what you need! The NHS's annual stop smoking event has seen over two million people go smoke-free over the past ten years. During that time, the number of smokers in the UK has dropped by almost 30%.

Becoming a non-smoker is one of the most powerful choices you can make to improve your health.

There are many ways to stop smoking, including sudden withdrawal, taking NRT or getting hypnotised. To maximise your chances of success, we suggest making use of the support and advice made available through the [NHS](#).

Managing cravings is key

Managing cravings effectively is widely recognised as the single most important factor to successfully stop smoking.

Although your urges might feel very strong at the time, they will be fairly short lived and should pass quickly within a few minutes.

Each time you resist a craving, you're one step closer to getting past this phase and stopping smoking for good.

Using **nicotine replacement therapy** (NRT) such as patches and gums can help satisfy your cravings whilst gradually reducing your nicotine requirement. These methods can also double your chances of successfully quitting.

Your doctor may also prescribe you specific medications that control your cravings, such as Zyban and Champix.

Self-help strategies

NRT and medications to stop smoking can help control your cravings, but they won't always eradicate them fully. You will still need focus, self-discipline and consistency. To help you on your journey, we recommend that you follow these proven self-help strategies:

- **Set a date to stop smoking and stick to it.** You'll find it much easier to quit if you have a single point in time to focus on.

- **Remind yourself why you're doing this.** List all the reasons why you'd like to quit and refer back to it on a regular basis.
- **Side-step the cravings.** Anticipate your triggers and create a list of five-minute distraction activities to use throughout the day. This could include going for a walk, doing some housework or phoning a friend.
- **Surround yourself with support.** Tell people close to you that you're stopping - including smokers - and let them know that you're going to need their support.

Don't forget - support is free!

If you haven't already, we recommend that you visit [Smokefree](#) - the NHS's free stop smoking service, which includes a **personal plan to help you quit**.

Evidence shows that if you can stop for 28 days **you're five times more likely to stop for good**.

Make that 28 days this October - with [Stoptober](#)!