

# It is final. I am quitting smoking!

*This brochure is designed for those who are ready to try to quit smoking*

**Print this brochure, rather than read it on the screen**

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So, you have decided to try stop smoking? **Congratulations on an excellent decision!** This brochure contains advice based on the experience of hundreds of ex-smokers who have participated in our surveys. In reading, consider how they have come to free themselves from cigarettes.

## Reasons to quit smoking

To successfully quit smoking, you must be well-convinced of the validity of the decision. Start by making a list of the reasons why you want to quit smoking. You can then put this list in a visible spot.

### The reasons why I want to quit smoking

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Here is what some ex-smokers told us about their experience of quitting. Imagine the day when you can express the same point of view!

- "I'm proud of myself."

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Here is what some ex-smokers told us about their experience of quitting. Imagine the day when you can express the same point of view!

- "I'm proud of myself."
- "I feel the satisfaction of having won the battle."
- "I don't impose my smoking on those around me."
- "This valorizes me in the eyes of those around me." "My family is very pleased."
- "I have more energy." "I am in better shape."
- "I feel fresher when I wake up in the morning."
- "I am less tired."
- "I breathe better." "I can do sports more easily."
- "I have rediscovered tastes and smells."
- "I have more money available." "I save 25 Dollars a week (a fill-up at the gas station)."
- "I do not always have to think to bring cigarettes with me."
- "I have better breath." "The smell on my clothes has disappeared."
- "I don't always have to be preoccupied about my lungs."
- "I do not cough anymore." "I do not have headaches anymore." "One gets sore throats less often."

## **The advantages of quitting smoking for your health:**

- In stopping smoking, you immediately lower the associated critical risks to your health. Whatever your age or state of health, it is NEVER too late to quit smoking.
- People who have quit smoking before the age of 50 cut in half their risk of dying in the next fifteen years, as compared to those who continue to smoke.
- Women who quit smoking before becoming pregnant or at the beginning of their pregnancy reduce the risks to the child and to themselves.
- Parents who stop smoking reduce the risks of respiratory diseases for their children (asthma, infections, etc.), in addition to the risks of sudden infant death (SIDS).
- If you have already a disease caused by tobacco, stopping smoking reduces the risks of complications of this disease.

## **A few strategies to prepare yourself to quit smoking**

We know it is not easy to quit smoking. But we also know that you are capable of quitting smoking, just like thousands of other ex-smokers. Most ex-smokers were not successful at stopping the first time, but needed an average of 4 attempts. Try again and again, and you will finally succeed. Just like in all other domains, practice makes perfect. To succeed, you will need to properly prepare your attempt to quit. Here are the techniques that ex-smokers have used during this step of preparation.

### **Get support**

Many ex-smokers have said that the help of those around them was an essential element of their success. Look around for people you can trust and talk with them about your intention to stop smoking. Watch out for certain smokers, though, as they can be jealous of you. Mostly try to get support from non-smokers. If your spouse smokes, encourage him or her to stop smoking. If your spouse stops smoking, this will decrease your risk of relapsing.

### **Ask for professional help**

The help of a professional significantly improves your chances of success. Some possibilities are:

- Asking your doctor. He or she can help you or show you where to go.
- Asking a specialist in smoking cessation.
- Participating in a group-quitting program (e.g., the 5-day Plan).

### **Try it out**

To learn how to deal with nicotine withdrawal and cravings, you can stop smoking for a few hours, then for a half-day, then for a whole day. These brief periods without cigarettes can prepare you to definitively stop smoking and increase your confidence in your capacity to resist cigarettes. To avoid cravings and other withdrawal symptoms during these brief periods without cigarettes, you can use a nicotine replacement product (patch, chewing gum, nasal spray, etc.).

### **Use favorable occasions**

Many events can prompt you to think about your smoking habit: colds, bronchitis, pregnancy, the birth of a child, the illness of a smoker around you, etc. You can use these occasions to stop smoking, but do not wait too long: the "magic moment" when quitting is easy does not exist.

### **Abstain absolutely from picking up a cigarette after having stopped smoking**

Very often, taking one cigarette leads to a relapse. After quitting, it is **VERY IMPORTANT** to avoid taking even just one drag of a cigarette.

## Evaluate your addiction level:

How many cigarettes do you smoke per day, on average?	_____ cig. / day
In the morning, how many minutes pass before you smoke your first cigarette?	_____ minutes
If you have already tried to quit smoking:  The last time you tried to quit, did you feel withdrawal symptoms? (e.g., uncontrollable urge to smoke, irritability, depression, etc.)	Yes No

- If you smoke more than 10 cigarettes per day,
- **or** if you smoke less than 60 minutes after you get up,
- **or** if you felt withdrawal symptoms the last time you tried to quit,

then we strongly recommend that you use a nicotine substitution product (patch, chewing gum, nasal spray, etc.), beginning the first day without cigarettes. These products attenuate or even eliminate withdrawal symptoms.

If you used nicotine replacement therapy during your previous quit attempt but failed to quit on this occasion, then you can use the new drug bupropion, which may help you quit smoking the next time.

### Keep a smoker's journal

Many ex-smokers have found that keeping a journal has helped them to better control their smoking and to break their habits. They have said that this opened their eyes about a habit that they thought they understood. Why not do the following experiment for a few days? Keep a photocopy of the journal (see last page) in your packet of cigarettes and fill it out before you light each cigarette. Each night, re-read your journal and think about it.

### Quitting all at once or little by little?

You can stop smoking "cold turkey" or reduce the number of cigarettes you smoke each day. Some ex-smokers stopped all at once. However, in order to be effective, this method requires adequate preparation, as described in this brochure. If you prefer the progressive method, here is how you do it.

### The progressive method

The progressive method is mostly recommended for people who smoke more than 20 cigarettes per day. After cutting back their consumption to 15 to 20 cigarettes a day, these people should stop smoking right away, in a single step, because it is an illusion to think that they will be able to go for long before just building up their consumption again.

### Cut back on the cigarettes that are easiest to skip

The Smoker's Journal helps you cut back on cigarettes you light automatically, without thinking. Do only smoke the cigarettes that seem really necessary to you.

### Space out the time between cigarettes

Gradually increase the time between each cigarette, up to the point where you are capable of remaining without smoking for several hours or for an entire evening.

## Abstain from smoking from time to time

- Try to keep from smoking for as long as possible in the morning.
- Go out for 1 or 2 hours without taking cigarettes with you.
- Try to not smoke for fifteen minutes after having a coffee.
- To prepare yourself to resist cigarettes after a meal, you could rehearse the following exercise for a couple of days: just stay at the table after the meal for 15 minutes without smoking. Rehearsing this scene several times will help you disrupt the association between the end of the meal and the cigarette.

## Buy only one pack at a time

Avoid keeping reserves and buying cartons of cigarettes.

## Change your habits

- If you use to smoke just after waking up, take a shower or immediately prepare your breakfast instead.
- If you have the habit of smoking after you have eaten, leave the table immediately after the meal.
- If you have the habit of smoking in certain chair, avoid sitting in it for a while.

## Limit the places and the occasions where you smoke

Designate some places where you are allowed to smoke and avoid smoking anywhere else (e.g., in your car, in your apartment, in the presence of children, in the presence of non-smokers).

## Luck favors the prepared!

You will increase your chances of success if you prepare yourself to overcome the difficulties that you can run into after you stop smoking. Think in advance about ways to deal with these:

1. about the situations that give you the urge to smoke.
2. about the case, where, by accident, you pick up one or a few cigarettes.
3. about withdrawal symptoms.
- 4.

## 1) High risk situations

Certain situations are particularly conducive to smoking. It is useful to recognize these situations and to prepare a strategy to resist the urge to smoke in each before you get there. For this, start by filling out the questionnaire that follows. You can also read our advice on management of risk situations in our brochure entitled "I just quit smoking."

<b>Risky situation</b>	<b>My strategy to resist smoking in this situation</b>
In the presence of other smokers	
After a meal or a coffee	
In the case of stress or depression	
In case of the urgent need to smoke	
Other situation:	

## 2) If by accident, you pick up some cigarettes again,

Right away, prepare an **emergency plan** in case you pick up some cigarettes again, because if you do not respond immediately, you strongly risk starting smoking again.

- Remind yourself about your commitment not to smoke.
- Avoid scolding yourself.
- Consider this accident as a normal event of the quitting process, as a learning experience, not as a failure.
- Get help from your friends and family.
- Think about it. Analyze the reasons that prompted you to pick up some cigarettes.
- Above all, avoid starting to smoke on a regular basis again. Do not buy cigarettes, and throw away all cigarettes in your possession.

## 3) Withdrawal symptoms

In the course of quitting, many smokers feel symptoms of withdrawal. **These symptoms diminish after a few days, then disappear.** Products that contain nicotine (patch, chewing gum, nasal spray) may strongly reduce these symptoms, or even eliminate them altogether. The table below details the symptoms and suggests ways to deal with them.

Symptom	What do I do in this case?
The irresistible urge to smoke	Wait until it passes (in general 3 to 5 minutes). Get busy. Start another activity. Think of something else. Focus on your work. Drink some water, chew some gum or eat sugarless candy. Eat something (e.g., some fruit). Breathe deeply several times. Do a relaxing exercise. Brush your teeth. Tell yourself the symptoms will disappear in a few days.
Irritability, nervousness, difficulty in concentrating	Take a break, take a walk, take a shower, breathe deeply, use a relaxation technique. Sleep a lot. Take a nap.
Headaches	Sleep more. Do a relaxation exercise. Avoid drinking coffee or alcohol.
Increases in appetite	If you fear gaining weight, avoid fatty foods, do more exercise.
Insomnia	Avoid drinking coffee or tea at night. Drink some warm milk before you go to bed. Do some exercise.
Bad feelings Depression	Like other withdrawal symptoms, depression disappears over time. To deal with it, stay active, do something you like to do, speak with someone you can trust, avoid being alone, do some sports or manual work.  If the depression does not pass, take it seriously and consult a doctor.

## Just do it!

After you have prepared, it is time to do it! Start by making a firm decision to stop smoking. **Many ex-smokers have confirmed that this firm self-commitment made the difference between successful and unsuccessful attempts to stop smoking.**

## Set a quit date

It is very important to **set a date** to stop smoking - and to stick with it. Many smokers wait for the "ideal time." They tell themselves "I will stop on my next vacation, when I have found a job, after my exams, "or "I have too much to worry about right now." The ideal moment will never come. Since you have already decided to quit smoking, what are you waiting for? Would you prefer to wait until you have contracted a fatal smoking-related disease? Take the initiative and fix a date to stop in the **next 30 days**.

## Prepare yourself for your quit day

When the day comes that you fixed to stop smoking, throw away all your cigarettes, and do not save any. Hide all of your matches, lighters and ashtrays. Talk about your attempt to quit with people you trust. Ask your family, your friends and your colleagues to support you and to be understanding if you are in a bad mood. Ask smokers to respect your decision.

## Make a contract with yourself

Why not sign a contract with yourself like the one below? This can help you stick with your decision.

### **Contract with myself to stop smoking**

I will stop smoking completely by:

\_\_\_\_ (day ) \_\_\_\_\_ (month) \_\_\_\_ (year).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

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## For people who have already tried unsuccessfully to stop smoking

Relapsing is a normal phenomenon, a part of the process of stopping. **On average, ex-smokers have made 4 serious attempts to quit before finally quitting for good.** Keep trying again and again. Just like everything else, it takes practice to get to where you want to go. Remind yourself that your attempt to quit has given you the experience necessary to increase your chances of really quitting the next time around. Having relapsed does not signify that you are incapable of quitting. It only means that you did not react well in a unfavorable situation. You have been capable of going for several days or months without cigarettes. This proves that you are fully capable of living without smoking. Tell yourself that your next attempt to quit will be different from the previous one, as you will this time be better prepared with the advice and information found in this series of brochures!

**Think about the circumstances of your relapse and of how to better resist cigarettes under similar circumstances.** This will help to have more success the next time. For this, fill out the following questionnaire:

1- Under what circumstances did you start to smoke again? (date, hour, place, with whom, what activity, what was your mood?).

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2- What triggered your urge to smoke?

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3- The next time, how will you resist the urge to smoke under similar circumstances?

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## What now?

Ensure that you have properly prepared your attempt to quit smoking by filling out the following check-list:

Check-list	OK
1- I have made a list of the reasons why I want to quit smoking	
2- I have found someone who will support my efforts to quit	
3- I have fixed a date to stop smoking within the next 30 days	
5- I have learned the lessons from my past attempts to stop smoking	
6- I have prepared an "emergency plan" in case I smoke again some cigarettes	
7- I have tossed all of my cigarettes and hidden all of my lighters and ashtrays	
8- I have identified strategies to resist the urge to smoke in risky situations:	
- in presence of other smokers	
- in case of stress, depression or irritability	
- in case of strong urges to smoke	
9- I have signed the "Contract with Myself" to stop smoking	

**You are completely capable of becoming and then remaining an ex-smoker!**

**We wholly support the success of your efforts to stop smoking!!**

## Smoker's Journal

Photocopy and cut out this journal. Over a few days, fill it out before lighting each cigarette. At night, go over it and think about it.

Cig no.	Date	Hour	Situation	Mood*	Urge**	How to resist the temptation to smoke?
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

Review of the day of (date): \_\_\_\_\_

The situations where the urge to smoke was strongest: \_\_\_\_\_

The most effective strategies to resist in these situations: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Mood: neutral, worried, stressed, angry, depressed, content, relaxed, tired, bored.

\*\* Intensity of the urge to smoke: none=0, very weak=1, moderate=2, strong=3, extreme=4.

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This brochure was created at the Institute of Social and Preventative Medicine of the University of Geneva, with the support of the Swiss Cancer League, the Swiss National Science Foundation, the Swiss-Romande Lottery, the Geneva Department of Social Action and Health, the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health, The Swiss Foundation for Health Promotion, Pharmacia & Upjohn, the Swiss Pulmonary League, the Cipret-Genève and the Jura Canton Health Service. We thank the Swiss Association for Smoking Prevention (at) for it help and support.

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