

Giving up smoking

If you have just been diagnosed with cancer, [quitting smoking](#) has important benefits. It can also improve your health if you are recovering from cancer, or living with cancer. It reduces your risk of heart and lung disease, strokes, [bone thinning](#) and smoking-related cancers. It also improves your circulation, lowers blood pressure and boosts your immune system.

If you are having treatment for cancer, stopping smoking may help the treatment work better. It can help your body respond to the treatment and heal more quickly. You are also likely to have fewer side effects. Any side effects you do have are likely to be less serious. Stopping smoking may also lower the risk of certain cancers coming back after treatment.

Deciding to give up smoking and wanting to succeed are important steps in becoming a non-smoker. It's not always easy to quit, and it may take you a few attempts. There are lots of tools and resources to make quitting easier. The first step is asking your doctor, nurse or GP for advice and contacting your local NHS stop smoking service.

Tips to help you quit

- Evidence shows that the best way to stop smoking is to get advice, support and the right stop smoking treatments for you.
- Quitting smoking is much easier when you have support from others. Talk to your cancer team, GP or pharmacist. Your family and friends can encourage and support you in getting ready to stop smoking and when you stop.
- Using an NHS stop smoking service gives you a much higher chance of success than trying to stop on your own. Support from stop smoking services combined with stop smoking aids makes it 4 times as likely you will stop smoking successfully. Your advisor will help you to find a combination of methods that works for you. This all helps to improve your chances of quitting.
- In England, contact [NHS Smokefree](#).
- In Northern Ireland, contact [Stop Smoking NI](#).
- In Scotland, contact [Quit Your Way Scotland](#).
- In Wales, contact [Help Me Quit](#).
- Treatments like nicotine replacement therapy, stop smoking prescription medicines and e-cigarettes can help you with cravings.
- Nicotine replacement therapy comes as skin patches, chewing gum, tablets, lozenges, inhalers, mouth sprays and nasal sprays. You can get them on prescription from your GP or NHS stop smoking service, or over the counter at your local pharmacy.
- There are medicines that can help with cravings and withdrawal. They are only available on prescription. They don't contain nicotine. Like all medicines, they have possible side effects. It is important to read the information leaflet that comes with these drugs. Your doctor or pharmacist can tell you more about these treatments.
- Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) can contain nicotine in the e-liquid, which is inhaled as a vapour. Using an e-cigarette is known as vaping. You cannot get them on prescription so you have to buy them. They are most effective if used with support from an NHS stop smoking service.

Macmillan Cancer Support resources

We have more information on our [website](#), including audiobooks. Or you can order our free booklets and leaflets on be.macmillan.org.uk such as:

- [Physical activity and cancer](#).

We produce information in a [range of formats](#) and [languages](#). To order these, visit our website or call our support line.

Further Macmillan support

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm. Or visit macmillan.org.uk where you can [chat to us online](#).

Deaf or hard of hearing? Call using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app. - Speak another language? Telephone interpreters are available. Please tell us in English the language you would like to use.

Or if you want to share your experiences or ask questions, you can find others who understand on our [Online Community](#).

Other useful contact details

- NHS Smokefree (England) – visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree or call 0300 123 1044
- Stop Smoking NI (Northern Ireland) – visit www.stopsmokingni.info
- NHS Inform (Scotland) – visit www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/stopping-smoking or call 0800 84 84 84
- Help Me Quit (Wales) – visit www.helpmequit.wales or call 0800 085 2219.

Notes and questions
