

Giving up smoking

After being diagnosed with cancer, many people want to make positive changes to their lives. If you are a smoker, choosing to stop is a decision that will benefit your general health and increase your energy levels.

Stopping smoking reduces your risk of heart and lung disease, strokes and smoking-related cancers. It can also improve circulation and boost 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, and they are usually less severe. Stopping smoking may also lower your risk of cancer coming back after treatment.

Giving up smoking may be hard, but stopping will make you healthier. It will also make you feel better and save you money.

Preparing to stop smoking

- Make a list of your reasons to stop. They might be health-related or about saving money.
- Set a date to stop completely and mark it on your calendar.
- Think about what you are going to do instead of smoking.
- Set yourself goals to get through the first day, week and month without smoking. Plan rewards for yourself with each goal that you set.
- Keeping a smoking diary can help you work out your smoking habits and recognise situations when you want to smoke. This can help you stay in control and avoid triggers.
- Get support from your GP and pharmacist. They can refer you to a free, local stop-smoking service.
- Your GP can provide nicotine-replacement therapies, such as nicotine patches and gums.

Stopping smoking

- Stay away from places or situations that you associate with smoking.
- Spend time with non-smokers and ex-smokers. Your nearest stop-smoking service can give you details of support groups.
- Keep busy. A stress ball can help if you need to do something with your hands. Or you could start a hobby like knitting, doing crosswords or playing computer games.
- Some people use complementary therapies, hypnotherapy, mental imagery (visualisation) or mindfulness meditation.
- When you feel the urge to smoke, have a healthy snack. For example, you could have a carrot or a piece of fruit, or some sugar-free chewing gum.
- If smoking is part of your evening routine, try doing things to distract yourself, such as reading a book or listening to a podcast.

Local resources:

Resource	Contact details

National resources:

Resource	Contact details
• NHS Smokefree (England)	www.nhs.uk/smokefree
• NHS Inform (Scotland)	www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/stopping-smoking
• Help me Quit (Wales)	www.helpmequit.wales
• Want2stop (Northern Ireland)	www.want2stop.info

Further information

www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/coping/maintaining-a-healthy-lifestyle/giving-up-smoking

Our booklets and leaflets are available to order free on be.macmillan.org.uk

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More information and support

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm, or visit macmillan.org.uk

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.

We produce information in a range of formats and languages. To order these, visit macmillan.org.uk/otherformats or call our support line.

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