

## Top seven reasons why people smoke

Congratulations to all who are in the process of quitting smoking. It is important to develop a strategy to deal with those times when you crave a cigarette. One way to overcome your smoking related habits is to identify them, and find substitutes for each one. Identify the reasons that most directly apply to you. These habits - and their substitutes - should become the focus of your stop smoking strategy.

REASON	SUBSTITUTE
<b>Smoking energizes me.</b> It perks me up and keeps me from slowing down.	Stay physically active, go for a walk, stretch, get some fresh air, take a nap
<b>Smoking keeps me occupied.</b> I enjoy lighting cigarettes, holding them, and blowing smoke rings.	If you feel you need to smoke to keep your hands busy, keep yourself occupied. Carry a stress ball, knit, woodworking, and doodle to keep your hands busy. Nibble on carrot sticks
<b>Smoking is pleasing.</b> It is physically comforting and relaxing	If "pleasure" is your main reason for smoking, try a substitute that brings you as much pleasure, such as: Go for a walk. Play or listen to your favorite music. Have a nice hot bath. Practice yoga or other relaxation techniques.
<b>Smoking is a crutch.</b> It calms me down when I'm angry, or feeling stressed.	If you need cigarettes to help you cope with stress, moods or tension, try using one of the following stress reduction methods. Identify the source of your stress, mood or tension and try to avoid it for a few weeks. Learn problem solving methods. Relax by practicing deep breathing or yoga. Gently stretching your muscles or relax them. Take a walk or a 5 minute break to release stress.
<b>I'm hooked.</b> I need cigarettes. I miss not having them on me. I crave them when I'm not smoking	If you smoke because your body really "needs" it, you can break your habit and handle the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal with these tried and true substitutes: Wait 5 minutes whenever the urge to smoke strikes, the cravings will slowly disappear. Chew gum. Do deep breathing exercise. Distract your self to take your mind off cigarettes.
<b>Smoking is a habit.</b> It is such a parts of me; I sometimes light a second one before I've finished the first.	If smoking is an unconscious part of your daily routine, you should try: Take the time to identify the environmental triggers that make you want to smoke. Change your routine so smoking doesn't fit in anymore. Brush your teeth or go for a walk after meals. Avoid food and drinks you associate with smoking alcohol and coffee.
<b>I am a social smoker.</b> I usually smoke with others, at parties or in bars.	If you're a social smoker, put your non-smoker friends and family members to work to help you quit smoking. You may also want to try; Avoiding smoking areas. Leave for a few minutes when you're in a situation where you feel you are tempted to smoke. Choose "non smoking" activities (e.g. movies, restaurants).

**If you slip** and have just one cigarette, don't sweat it. Just don't let that slip turn into a fall. Take the time to ask yourself: why did I smoke? -where was I? -who was I with? -how did it make me feel afterwards?

Staying smoke-free is a very difficult thing. You deserve to feel proud. A reward is a good way to congratulate yourself for your efforts and success. Every three months you could acknowledge your efforts by purchasing a gift with the money you have saved being smoke free.