

*Nicotine patches are great. Stick one over each eye and you can't find your cigarettes.*

*Author unknown*

### **WHEN SMOKERS QUIT THE BENEFITS ARE IMMEDIATE**

- 1. 20 minutes after quitting:** Your heart rate and blood pressure drops.
- 2. 12 hours after quitting:** The carbon monoxide level in your blood returns to normal.
- 3. 2 weeks to 3 months after quitting:** Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.
- 4. 1 to 9 months after quitting:** Coughing and shortness of breath decrease.
- 5. 1 year after quitting:** The risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.
- 6. 5 years after quitting:** Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker 5 to 15 years after quitting.
- 7. 10 years after quitting:** The lung cancer death rate is about half of a smokers.
- 8. 15 years after quitting:** The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a nonsmoker's.



For more information about smoking cessation contact:

SmokeFree Virginia

Call 1-800-QUITNOW (784-8669)

Visit [www.smokefreevirginia.org](http://www.smokefreevirginia.org)

# UVa

## Quit for Good!

Quitting Is Hard.  
We Can Help.



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## QUITTING

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### WHY IS IT SO HARD TO QUIT SMOKING?

It is hard to quit smoking because tobacco contains nicotine. Nicotine is very addictive. Smokers become both physically and psychologically dependent on nicotine. Nicotine can be as addictive as heroin or cocaine in some individuals.

When smokers try to quit, the absence of nicotine leads to withdrawal symptoms. Physically, the body reacts to the absence of nicotine.

Psychologically, the smoker is faced with giving up a habit, which requires a major change in behavior. To quit successfully both physical and psychological withdrawal symptoms must be addressed.

Common withdrawal symptoms include:

- irritability
- restlessness
- trouble concentrating
- increased appetite
- sleep disturbances

### GOOD REASONS FOR QUITTING

- You will live longer and live better.
- Quitting will lower your chance of having a heart attack, stroke, or cancer.



### KEYS TO QUITTING

Studies have shown that these five steps will help you quit and quit for good. You have the best chance of quitting if you use them together:

1. Get ready.
2. Get support.
3. Learn new skills and behaviors.
4. Get medication and use it correctly.
5. Be prepared for relapse of difficult situations.

### QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why do you want to quit?
2. When you tried to quit in the past, what helped and what didn't?
3. What will be the most difficult situations for you after you quit?
4. Who can help you through tough situations?

### QUIT SMOKING RESOURCES

#### American Lung Association

(800) LUNGUSA

[www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)

#### American Cancer Society

(800) ACS-2345

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

#### American Heart Association

(800) 242-8721

[www.amhrt.org](http://www.amhrt.org)

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