



King Hussein Cancer Center



YOUR GUIDE TO QUIT SMOKING



ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT QUITTING SMOKING? IF YOU ARE, CONGRATULATIONS FOR TAKING THIS IMPORTANT STEP!

This brochure will help you:



Set your own reasons to quit



Adopt practical skills to deal with urges and withdrawal symptoms



Remain a non-smoker for good

WHY IS SMOKING HARMFUL?

When tobacco is burned, 7,000 chemicals are released in the smoke and hundreds of these chemicals are toxic and negatively affect almost all organs. At least 70 of these chemicals are known to cause cancer.

Smoking causes many other diseases besides cancer.

That is why smokers have a higher risk of developing many chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease (such as heart attack), respiratory diseases (such as emphysema and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), type 2 diabetes, and reproductive diseases. These health risks increase the more you smoke and the longer you smoke.

Did you know that smoking is the greatest cause of preventable death in the world today?

WHAT MAKES TOBACCO SO ADDICTIVE?

Smokers become addicted to nicotine, a substance that is found naturally in tobacco. Nicotine from tobacco is addictive because it reaches the brain very quickly, where it attaches to receptors and prompts chemicals to be released in the brain. The chemicals make you feel temporarily good or more relaxed or alert.



But these changes do not last, and when the nicotine effect wears off, smokers usually feel stressed and go back to their tobacco use. The symptoms that take place when nicotine's effect wears off are called withdrawal symptoms (your body's response to not having nicotine).

Addiction levels may vary from one smoker to another, which means some people will experience stronger withdrawal symptoms than others.

Over time, nicotine also changes the number of receptors in the brain that crave nicotine. This means that with time, your brain becomes accustomed to your nicotine intake and you may feel the need to smoke more in order to get the same effect. This is why you become addicted to smoking. In fact, nicotine ranks amongst the most addictive substances following heroin and cocaine.

Addiction to nicotine explains why even though many smokers want to quit, they are unable to. Some smokers may have already tried to quit but could not handle the withdrawal symptoms.

IS IT TOO LATE TO QUIT?

You may think that the damage has already been done because you have been smoking for a long time, but it is never too late to quit. Quitting smoking at any age has major benefits to your body.

Even if you may have already been diagnosed with a disease, quitting smoking will help ensure that your disease is managed much more effectively, and that you do not develop complications as a result of severe or poorly controlled disease (which are more likely to occur if you continue to smoke).

The sooner you stop smoking, the better it is for your health.

HOW TO START: ASK YOURSELF WHY YOU WANT TO QUIT

Most smokers are interested in quitting smoking, and many have already tried to quit, but only a few smokers are able to quit from the first try. It is important not to give up early on.

Find your own personal reasons to quit that you feel strongly about. For example:

- I want to heal my body from the damage done by smoking.
- I want to improve my physical appearance.
- I hate the way I have been smelling lately.
- I want to be in control of my life.
- I want to quit for religious reasons.
- I want to be more physically fit.
- I am having surgery.
- I want to lower my risk of cancer and diseases.
- I want to breathe better.
- I want to save money.
- I want to set a good example for my kids.
- I want to do something that will make me proud of myself.
- I want to protect my loved ones from secondhand smoke.
- I want to start a family one day.
- Add your own: _____

TIME TO QUIT, NOW WHAT?

Now that you have set your reasons to quit, you should make a plan to prepare for quitting and your life after quitting. Here are your options:



COLD TURKEY

Quit on your own without any help.



COUNSELING

Quit with the help of behavioral counseling and peer support.



MEDICATIONS

Quit by using medications and seek an expert opinion from a Tobacco Treatment Specialist to use medications properly.



COUNSELING AND MEDICATIONS

Quit through combining both medications and counseling to increase your chances of staying smoke-free.

Studies have shown that less than 5% of smokers are able to use the “cold turkey” method.

Once you have decided on the treatment plan suitable for you, it is important that you know the main steps to prepare for quitting:

1. Commit to a quit date

- Make sure you are ready, and pick a date. Perhaps picking an important date will help you commit to quitting, for example, a birthday, the first day of Ramadan, or a special anniversary.
- Prepare for quitting by beginning to cut back on your use of tobacco in the week before quitting.



✦ My quit date is: _____

2. Prepare for withdrawal symptoms

Some of the withdrawal symptoms which you may experience during your quit journey include the following:

- Difficulty concentrating
- Restlessness
- Anger, irritability or frustration
- Anxiety
- Increased appetite
- Difficulty sleeping
- Depression
- Urges to smoke (cravings)

It becomes easier for you to deal with withdrawal symptoms if you are already expecting them.

Symptoms are usually the most intense in the first and second week of quitting. During that time, symptoms will come and go, and then become weaker and less frequent as your body adjusts to this change. Most symptoms are gone within four weeks. After that, you may occasionally experience a craving, but do not let this discourage you.

Exercise helps in reducing withdrawal symptoms and lowering your stress levels. It will also help you control your weight.

3. Resist the urge to smoke

People who smoke have a history of associating specific activities or feelings with the act of smoking, this is called 'urges' or 'cravings'. For example, when you feel happy or sad, when you have a deadline, or even when you have coffee.

Which of the situations listed below trigger your urge to smoke?

- When you are bored
- When you see others smoking
- When you want to relax
- When you are in the car
- When you finish a meal
- When you feel frustrated, worried, upset, tense, nervous, angry, anxious or irritated
- When you need more energy and cannot concentrate
- When you drink coffee or tea
- When you feel that smoking is part of your appearance
- When alcohol is involved
- Add your own: _____

The sooner you understand why you smoke, the sooner you can manage your response to these triggers.

Urges usually go away within 15-20 minutes, but some can last longer. Urges vary in frequency and intensity from one smoker to another.

When you feel the urge to smoke, try to apply the 4Ds:



DELAY

acting on an urge because cravings come and go quickly, so convince yourself that you can wait it out.



DEEP BREATHS

slowly in and out, which will help you relax and allow the urge to pass.



DRINK WATER

slowly and throughout the day. It will help get rid of toxins in your body.



DISTRACT

yourself by becoming active. Go for a walk or leave the room that you are in.

MEDICATIONS THAT COULD HELP WITH SYMPTOMS

Treatment with prescription medications is used to help people manage their withdrawal symptoms. Some contain nicotine (nicotine-replacement therapies).

Nicotine-replacement therapies contain nicotine in smaller amounts than those found in tobacco products, and without all the other toxic chemicals in tobacco products. By using them, you will be able to relieve the cravings to smoke.

Nicotine-replacement therapies include:

- Nicotine inhaler
- Nicotine nasal spray
- Nicotine gum
- Nicotine lozenge
- Nicotine patches



It is important to use the nicotine-replacement therapies properly and follow the instructions provided with the product.

For effective use of these nicotine-replacement therapies, you should consult a Tobacco Treatment Specialist on the nicotine dosage your body needs.

There are non-nicotine medicines as well:

- Bupropion (Zyban™): a prescription tablet medication that helps reduce cravings and symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.
- Varenicline (Champix™): a prescription tablet medication that interferes with the nicotine receptors in the brain. It lessens the pleasure of smoking and reduces the withdrawal symptoms.

Before taking any medication, make sure to consult with your pharmacist or doctor and mention if you have any allergies or if you are taking other medications.

CHANGE REQUIRES CHANGE

Here are some tips to maintain your smoke-free lifestyle:



Make the commitment: write a pledge and keep it somewhere where you can see it.

Get rid of smoking reminders: throw out ashtrays and any other items that remind you of smoking.



Ask for friends' and family's support: ask them to avoid smoking around you and to offer you positive reinforcement.

Avoid places that allow smoking: secondhand smoke can make you want to smoke again, so it is best you steer clear from these places.



Replace old behaviors: try to find new routines that are not associated with smoking.

Keep reminding yourself that even just one will hurt: do not let yourself slip with negative thoughts.



Reward yourself: give yourself a break and celebrate your successes.

WHAT IF YOU GO BACK TO SMOKING?

It is common to have a setback during your quit attempt and smoke once or twice, also known as a “slip” or a “lapse”. It is best if you put the slip behind you and move forward. Remind yourself of how far you have come and celebrate your successes to remain positive.

But if you return to your previous smoking behavior, also known as “relapse”, it would be best to consult a Tobacco Treatment Specialist with how to proceed from here on.

It takes several tries before smokers finally quit.

Slip and relapses are results of negative thinking and not feeling strong or confident enough to continue the quit journey. Mental exercises of reminding yourself why you decided to quit will help you get back on track.

STAYING POSITIVE

As you are beginning a new phase in your life, you may want to consider ways to change your behavior and how you deal with urges, and most importantly, how to enjoy life without smoking.

It is very crucial that you stay positive throughout your quit journey and avoid shooting yourself down. Positive self-talk is very powerful and it will make you more confident throughout your quit journey.



CONTACT A TOBACCO TREATMENT SPECIALIST

KHCC’s Tobacco Dependence Treatment Clinic is equipped with a certified team of Tobacco Treatment Specialists, and offers individualized treatment plans for patients. Treatment plans include smoking cessation consultation and counseling, medications and follow-up care. For further assistance, please call: **06-5300460 ext. 4086**, or **077-844-4517**. The Clinic, in cooperation with the Cancer Control Office, also participates in anti-tobacco awareness sessions and community outreach events. For more information about our outreach activities, please call: **06-5300460 ext. 2207** or **077-866-8017**.

You can visit our website here for more information:

<http://www.khcc.jo/section/khccs-tdt-clinic>

