

What You Can Do When the Craving Starts



Quitting smoking is not always easy, but with time, patience and effort, you can stay smoke-free. The urge to smoke usually passes within 5 to 10 minutes. Here are some tips to help you kick the habit!

Instead of smoking...

Stay busy

- Do things that you enjoy, such as reading, walking, gardening or playing sports.
- Keep yourself busy — run errands, clean the house, wash your car, do crafts or visit a friend.
- Be active — physical activity can help beat cravings. Keep your hands busy by holding a pencil or a stress ball.



Think about your reasons for quitting

- Write down the reasons why you want to quit.
- Think about how much money you will save by not smoking.
- Focus on the improvements you may feel since you quit, like breathing easier or having a better sense of taste and smell.

Get support

- Call a friend or support person.
- Use a “quit smoking” mobile app such as quitSTART.
- Call the toll-free national quit line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).



What You Can Do When the Craving Starts

Visit smoke-free areas

- Avoid places or things that remind you of smoking.
- Visit public places that do not allow smoking like a theater, library or a store.

Other helpful tips:

- Practice deep breathing to help you reduce stress.
- Drink water.
- Chew on a toothpick, sugarless gum, carrots or celery sticks.
- Brush your teeth after meals.
- Take a shower.
- Reward yourself for not smoking by using some of the money that you saved.
- Talk to your doctor about the best nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) that fits your lifestyle.
- Take it one day at a time!



If you have any questions about this content, call CalOptima Health Customer Service at the toll-free numbers below. We have staff who speak your language. Please visit us at www.caloptima.org/healthandwellness or scan the QR code to see health videos. Medi-Cal: 1-888-587-8088 (TTY 711), Monday - Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. OneCare (HMO D-SNP), a Medicare Medi-Cal Plan: 1-877-412-2734 (TTY 711), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.