

# Common Myths About Quitting Smoking



**Myth #1:** Smoking is just a bad habit.

**Fact:** Tobacco use is an addiction. According to the U.S. Public Health Service Clinical Practice Guidelines, Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence, nicotine is a very addictive drug. For some people, it can be as addictive as heroin or cocaine.

**Myth #2:** Quitting is just a matter of willpower.

**Fact:** Because smoking is an addiction, quitting is often very difficult. A number of treatments are available that can help.

**Myth #3:** If you can't quit the first time you try, you will never be able to quit.

**Fact:** Quitting is hard. Usually people make 2 or 3 tries, or more, before being able to quit for good.

**Myth #4:** The best way to quit is "cold turkey."

**Fact:** The most effective way to quit smoking is by using a combination of counseling and nicotine replacement therapy (such as the nicotine patch, inhaler, gum or nasal spray) or non-nicotine medicines. Your health care provider or smoking cessation clinic is the best place to go to for help with quitting.

**Myth #5:** Quitting is expensive.

**Fact:** Treatments cost from \$3 to \$10 a day. A pack-a-day smoker spends almost \$1,000 per year. Check with your health insurance plan to find out if smoking cessation medications and/or counseling are covered.

**Myth #6:** You gain weight when you quit smoking.

**Fact:** Cigarettes don't keep your body weight down and they can even cause cellulite. Some people replace cigarettes with food when they give up smoking, therefore, may put on a few pounds. If you've managed to give up smoking, you'll be able to tackle any weight gain, without any problems.

**Myth #7:** You become extremely irritable when you quit smoking.

**Fact:** It is important to know that over one-quarter of nicotine, when inhaled, goes straight to a section of the brain which regulates moods and behaviors. The longer you smoke, the more dependent you become on the cigarette to control your moods. It becomes your coping mechanism for daily stress. This is what makes you reach for the cigarette. It is this dependency that can cause you to "lose it" when you try to quit.

**Myth #8:** If you're a long-term or heavy smoker, it's too late to quit.

**Fact:** It's always beneficial to quit, no matter how many years you have smoked. Because of the profound impact smoking has on vital bodily functions – heart, circulation, lung capacity, nerves, blood pressure, etc. – it can only be good to quit smoking. All of these functions are instantly enhanced for the better when you stop smoking.