



**What I can do to  
stop smoking**

**[quit.org.au](https://quit.org.au)**

# The best way to stop smoking is to:

## Use stop smoking medications to reduce cravings and feelings of withdrawal.

- › Talk with your doctor about what's best for you.
- › You may use a nicotine patch together with nicotine lozenges, mouth spray, inhalator or gum. You can also use a prescribed stop smoking tablet. Some of these medications are cheaper with a script from your doctor.



## Get support to help you manage your triggers to smoke.

- › Talk with Quitline 13 7848. Quitline is a free telephone counselling service. Quitline counsellors are qualified experts in helping people break free from smoking.
- › Online support with QuitMail ([quit.org.au/quitmail](http://quit.org.au/quitmail)) or phone messages with QuitTxt ([quit.org.au/quitxt](http://quit.org.au/quitxt))

## You need to know

Tobacco smoke can affect how some medicines work. If you are taking any medicines, talk with your doctor or pharmacist as they may need to look at your medicines when you stop smoking.

If you have a lived experience of mental illness, it is best to talk with your doctor before you stop smoking. With the right support, many people with a lived experience of mental illness have quit.



# Know your triggers

## Some of the most common reasons why people smoke

- › **Addiction:** to relieve the craving for nicotine or a cigarette
- › **Habit:** feeling like smoking while doing things or taking a break – like watching TV or having a coffee
- › **Emotions:** feeling stressed, upset, angry, frustrated, bored or happy
- › **Pleasure:** to enjoy something even more or as a reward
- › **Social pressure:** feeling part of the crowd, bonding with other people who smoke.

These usually trigger cravings to smoke. Once you know your triggers you can work out ways to help manage them.

## When do you smoke?



Having coffee



Watching TV



After food



With friends



With alcohol



Other times?



When you're  
angry, stressed  
or bored



Other  
emotions?

# Getting through cravings

Cravings are the urge or desire to smoke. Cravings to smoke usually weaken after a few minutes. It helps if you think about or do something else.

## How do I reduce cravings?

- › **Use stop smoking medications:** like a nicotine patch together with nicotine lozenges, mouth spray, inhalator or gum, or use a prescribed stop smoking tablet
- › **Change your environment:** find at least one smokefree area for yourself and remove cigarettes and ashtrays from your room
- › **Try positive 'self-talk':** like reminding yourself of your main reasons to stop smoking
- › **Talk with someone:** about how you're feeling

Sometimes cravings can happen long after withdrawal symptoms have gone. This is normal and doesn't mean you are failing at quitting.

**Quitline counsellors  
can help you work out  
your smoking triggers  
and strategies that will  
work for you.**

**Quitline 13 7848  
[quit.org.au/callback](https://quit.org.au/callback)**

# Make new routines that help

## Smoking habit

- › First thing in the morning
- › After lunch or dinner
- › With alcohol or coffee
- › With another person who smokes
- › Just before bed

## Instead you could

- › Have a shower
- › Go walking
- › Change to a juice or tea
- › Ask them not to smoke around you
- › Have a warm drink



## Use the 4Ds



- › **Delay** acting on the craving for at least five minutes, the urge to smoke will pass



- › **Deep breathe** slowly



- › **Drink water** to take time out, sip slowly



- › **Do something else** to keep your hands busy. Put on some music, go for a walk or call someone you can talk to

## What might work for you

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## Call Quitline

You are more likely to stop smoking and stay quit when you talk with your Quitline counsellor.

### What is Quitline?

Quitline is a free and friendly telephone service. We care and we don't judge.

You don't have to feel ready to quit to call. We'll work with you no matter where you're at with your smoking.

Your call is confidential. This means you don't have to give your name if you don't want to.

Your Quitline counsellor is a qualified expert and understands that stopping smoking can be challenging. We know that most people will try a number of times before they stop smoking for good.

Quitline counsellors can also support you if you're using e-cigarettes to stop smoking and can help you stop vaping.



## How do I contact Quitline?

Call **13 7848**

Text 'call back' to **0482 090 634**

Chat online via **webchat** at **quit.org.au**

Message us on **WhatsApp 61 385 832 920**  
or **Facebook Messenger**

Or ask Quitline to call you back for free at  
**quit.org.au/callback**

Or your health worker or doctor can fill out a referral  
at **quit.org.au/referral** and send it off by fax or online

## What happens on the phone?

A typical first call to Quitline takes around 20 minutes.  
It covers:

- › how long you've been smoking
- › why you want to stop
- › understanding why you smoke
- › managing stress
- › information on ways to stop smoking and how to use stop smoking medications.

Your Quitline counsellor will work with you to figure out how they can support you on future calls. If you would like, Quitline can call you back. We can call you regularly during your quitting journey.

Quitline is a safe space for all, including for people in LGBTIQ+ communities. Aboriginal Quitline is provided by counsellors who are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Quitline uses an interpreter service for people who speak a language other than English. We also use the National Relay Service for people with a hearing or speech impairment.

# Medications to help you stop smoking

**Dealing with cravings and feelings of withdrawal is easier when you use stop smoking medications like:**

- › nicotine replacement therapy like patches, together with lozenges, mouth spray, gum or inhalator
- › prescribed stop smoking tablets.

## How do they work?

**Nicotine replacement therapy replaces some of the nicotine you would normally get from cigarettes. This helps reduce cravings and feelings of withdrawal.**

The patch is put on once a day. You can use nicotine lozenges, mouth spray, gum or inhalator when you feel like smoking.

Even better, when you think a craving might strike, use it before the craving takes hold.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about what would best suit you.

**Did you know:  
the cost of nicotine  
patches is less than  
\$8 with a concession  
card and a script from  
your doctor?**

**Prescribed stop smoking tablets also reduce cravings and feelings of withdrawal.**

A doctor can advise you on how they work and whether they're suitable for you.



**Stop smoking medications work best with people who show any signs of nicotine addiction, like:**

- › you smoke your first cigarette within 30 minutes of waking up
- › you smoke more than 10 cigarettes a day
- › you have cravings and feelings of withdrawal when you try to quit, like being easily upset or angry, low moods, finding it hard to focus, or problems with sleep.

→ **If you have a cigarette, it is **safe** to keep using your stop smoking medication and to keep trying to quit.**

## What can I get at low cost?

Some stop smoking medications are cheaper with a script from your doctor. This includes prescribed stop smoking tablets and nicotine patches.

**When you get the script from your doctor, you take it to your pharmacist so you can buy your medication at a discount.**

Each script costs less than \$8 for a concession card holder or less than \$35 for a standard script.

Nicotine patches under the 'Closing the Gap scheme' for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people are free with a concession or less than \$8 without a concession card.

You can get four weeks of nicotine patches with each script. You will need a new script to continue the course.

Prescribed tablets have a starter pack that lasts between 2 to 4 weeks depending on which tablet you are prescribed. You will need a new script to continue the course.

Remember to make an appointment with your doctor to get your next script before your current medication runs out.

## What else can I buy?

You can buy nicotine replacement therapy at pharmacies, supermarkets, other stores and online at the over-the-counter price. You do not need a script.

Buying nicotine replacement therapy without a script still costs less than smoking.

Talk to your pharmacist or doctor for advice.

# Nicotine replacement therapy



## Patches

Apply the patch to clean, unbroken, dry and hairless skin on the thigh, arm or chest. You absorb nicotine through your skin. You can use the patch together with lozenges, gum, mouth spray, or inhalator to reduce cravings. Different strengths and brands are available.



## Lozenges

Roll the lozenge around your mouth from time to time until it dissolves. Do not chew, suck or swallow the lozenge.



## Mouth spray

Relieves cravings the fastest. Aim and spray onto the inside of your cheek or under your tongue – avoid spraying your throat and lips.



## Gum

This is not like ordinary gum. Chew it slowly until there is a peppery taste, and then place it next to your cheek. When you can't taste it, chew and park it again.



## Inhalator

Releases nicotine into the mouth when you inhale through it. Mimics the hand-to-mouth action of smoking.

## Tip

You absorb nicotine through the lining of your mouth when using lozenges, mouth spray, gum or inhalator. They work best when you do not eat or drink anything except water just before or while using them.



## **Remember The best way to stop smoking is to:**

**Talk with Quitline**



**Use stop smoking medications:**

- › nicotine patches, lozenges, mouth spray, gum or inhalator
- › prescribed stop smoking medications

**You are more likely to **stop smoking and stay quit** when you talk with a **Quitline counsellor**.**

**You can call Quitline on  
13 7848 or visit [quit.org.au](http://quit.org.au)**

Nicotine patches can be used together with either lozenges, mouth spray, gum or the inhalator.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about which stop smoking medication would be best for you and how to use it.

### Want to know more?

Talk with your doctor about:

- › **which** medication would suit you
- › **side effects**
- › **other medicines:** how stopping smoking may affect them.

### Get help to stop smoking

How to get low-cost medications and support to help you stop smoking:

- 1 Talk to your doctor about what medication could work best for you. Get a script if needed
- 2 Take your script to a pharmacy so you can get your medication at a low cost
- 3 Call Quitline 13 7848 or let us know if we can call you back: [quit.org.au/callback](https://quit.org.au/callback).

“... if you start saying,  
‘I can do this’, you will.”

**Matt says he hasn't smoked  
for seven years, and used to  
smoke 30 a day.**

“If I could do it,  
anyone can do it.”

**Cheryl says she smoked for  
over 40 years, and is now a  
proud and happy non-smoker.**

**Check out more stories at  
[quit.org.au/stories](https://quit.org.au/stories)**

 **Quitline 13 7848**

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**Facebook Messenger @quitvic**
- › Or ask Quitline to **call you back** for  
**free** at **[quit.org.au/callback](https://quit.org.au/callback)**

This information is for general use only:  
please consult your health professional for further advice.

