



Smoking and how to give up



Smoking kills 120,000 people prematurely and is responsible for many diseases, including cancers, heart disease and stroke. By giving up smoking, you will reduce your risk of getting most of these diseases.

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Coronary heart disease and smoking

What is coronary heart disease? Coronary heart disease is the term used to describe the gradual narrowing of the linings of the coronary arteries which can lead to angina or a heart attack.

Coronary heart disease is the single most common cause of death in the UK. It is also the single most common cause of death under the age of 65.

Smoking is one of the major risk factors for coronary heart disease (a risk factor is something that increases the chance of getting the disease). Around 30,000 smokers have fatal heart attacks each year in the UK. The other major risk factors include high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, inactivity, obesity, diabetes and a strong family history of getting coronary heart disease. 1 in 5 deaths from coronary heart disease is associated with smoking.

The risk of a heart attack is greater if you smoke. In general, people who smoke cigarettes have about twice as great a risk of a heart attack as people who do not. However, the increased risk is particularly large in smokers aged under 50 – their heart attack death rates are up to 10 times greater than the rates for non-smokers of the

same age. The more you smoke and the younger you started, the greater your risk. Every cigarette counts. Smoking just three to six cigarettes a day doubles your chance of having a heart attack. Stopping smoking is the single most important thing you can do to avoid a heart attack. It's never too late to stop. However, no matter how long you've been smoking and how heavily, it's always beneficial to stop.

The effects of smoking on the arteries and the heart

Blood clots

Smoking has other harmful effects on the heart. Atheroma is the fatty material that can build up within the walls of the arteries. Research has shown that smokers have more atheroma in their arteries than non-smokers. This build-up of atheroma can cause the inside lining of the artery to rupture, leading to a clot. If the clot blocks the flow of blood to the heart, the heart muscle is starved of vital oxygen and this can lead to a heart attack. Some research suggests that smoking increases the amount of LDL cholesterol that the artery wall takes up, allowing atheroma to build up more easily. So overall, there is a clear link between smoking and permanent damage to the arteries.

Carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide joins onto the red protein called haemoglobin, in blood cells, making them less able to carry oxygen to the heart and all other parts of the body. In some smokers, up to half of the blood can be carrying carbon monoxide instead of oxygen. This deprives the heart of vital oxygen.

Nicotine

Nicotine stimulates the body to produce adrenaline which makes the heart beat faster, raises the blood pressure causing the heart to work harder, and can increase the risk of irregular heart rhythms.

Tar

It is the tar in cigarettes that causes cancer. However, if a cigarette is low in tar it does not necessarily mean that it has less nicotine and carbon monoxide. So low-tar cigarettes can be just as harmful to your heart. Also, people who smoke low-tar cigarettes tend to compensate by taking more puffs and inhaling more deeply. Just three or four extra puffs on a cigarette can transform a low-tar cigarette into a regular-strength cigarette.

What is second-hand smoking?

Second-hand smoking, or passive smoking, is where non-smokers inhale other peoples smoke. You may be aware of some of the unpleasant effects of being in a smoky environment: smarting eyes, a sore throat or headaches. You may not realise that second-hand smoking can have a harmful effect on your heart. Research shows that non-smokers living with smokers have an increased risk of heart disease of around 25%.

If you have angina or coronary heart disease, second-hand smoking is particularly harmful to you. You should avoid breathing in other people's smoke as much as possible.

Even if you don't have angina or heart disease, second-hand smoking is still harmful to you, and you should still avoid breathing in other people's smoke.



Low-tar cigarettes can be just as harmful to your heart as regular-strength cigarettes.

Women and smoking

Overall, coronary heart disease is the single most common cause of death in women, although women tend to develop coronary heart disease about 10 years later than men. Like men, women who smoke greatly increase their chances of developing coronary heart disease, cancer and chronic bronchitis. Women who take the contraceptive pill, and smoke as well, have a much greater risk of coronary heart disease and stroke. And the risks grow even greater as they get older.

Pregnant women who smoke are more likely to have an underweight baby, or have a stillbirth, or lose their baby by early death. The children of mothers who smoked during pregnancy are more likely to suffer delay in their physical and mental development up to the age of 11, compared with the children of non-smoking mothers.

Stopping smoking – tips and advice

Most smokers want to stop smoking. It's the single most important thing a smoker can do to live longer and stay in better health. At any one time, about one in six smokers are trying to quit. It's not easy but more than 11 million people in Britain are now successful ex-smokers. Most of those who stop do so by themselves. Being determined is the vital ingredient. There is no quick and easy way and nothing can **make** you stop – but, if you really want to, there are ways you can increase your chances of kicking the habit.



At any one time, about one in six smokers are trying to quit.

Ten steps to quitting smoking

1. Make a date and stick to it. Draw up a plan of action, thinking about what methods are available to you and having them ready before your quit date.
2. Keep busy to help take your mind off cigarettes. Throw away all your ashtrays, lighters, and tobacco.
3. Drink plenty of fluids. Keep a glass of water or sugar-free drink by you and sip it steadily. Try different flavours.
4. Get more active. Walk instead of using the bus or car. Try the stairs instead of the lift. Exercise helps you relax and can boost your morale.
5. Think positively. Withdrawal can be unpleasant but it is a sign that your body is recovering from the effects of tobacco. Irritability, urges to smoke and poor concentration are common. Don't worry – they usually disappear after a few weeks and are reduced by using nicotine replacement products (see page 9) or bupropion (see page 13).
6. Change your routine. Try to avoid the shop you usually buy cigarettes from. Perhaps you should avoid the pub or the break-room at work if there are lots of smokers around you. Try doing something totally different. Surprise yourself!
7. No excuses. Don't use a crisis or even good news to be an excuse for 'just one'. There is no such thing. You will soon want the next and the next.
8. Treat yourself. This is important. If you can, use the money you are saving by not smoking to buy something special – big or small – that you would not usually have.
9. Be careful what you eat. Try not to snack on fatty foods. If you do need to snack, try fruit, raw vegetables or sugar-free gum.
10. Take one day at a time. Each day without a cigarette is good news for your health, your family...and your pocket.

Remember you can always call the free BHF Smoking Advice Line 0800 169 1900 for extra support or Quitline® on 0800 00 22 00.

Each day without a cigarette
is good news for your health,
your family... and your pocket.

Methods and products

There are many different methods and products on the market – so many that it may seem that people are simply after your money. Or you may feel so desperate that you will try anything. It is important to check whether the product is **safe and effective** before you spend your time, energy and money on it. The aim of this booklet is to provide you with a guide to the known facts about the different ways to help you stop smoking (these are sometimes called smoking cessation aids). However, if you are in any doubt as to whether it is safe for you to use a product or method, check first with your pharmacist.



Nicotine replacement products can double your chances of successfully stopping smoking.

What to believe

Some manufacturers claim very high success rates for their products, promising between 80% and 90% effortless success. Yet there is no magic solution. To be certain that a product or method works it has to be put through proper tests, called clinical trials. If the product has an effect, it can then be compared to the effect achieved with another product. Not all the products available have been tested in this way.

A smoking cessation aid can:

- ease nicotine withdrawal
- boost your confidence and morale
- lessen the urge to smoke.

A smoking cessation aid cannot:

- do the quitting for you
- make you **want** to stop
- make it painless and easy.

If you decide to use a smoking cessation product it's important to know that there are two main types of products – those that contain nicotine and those that do not. This guide gives the most up-to-date results of clinical trials for both types.

Whatever method you choose to help you quit smoking, it is important to think it through in advance and prepare yourself as best you can for the difficulties ahead. If you want help with preparation, have a query about a particular product or any aspect of stopping, or want support and encouragement, especially during the difficult times, then Quitline® is there to help. Quitline® is a free telephone helpline staffed by trained smoking cessation counsellors who will do their best to help you. (See **Smoking helplines**.)

Independent research published in *Tobacco Control Magazine* states that Quitline® appeared to be “very successful in helping callers to stop smoking.”

Smoking helplines

The free BHF Smoking Advice Line 0800 169 1900
(Monday to Sunday 7am-11pm)

Or visit: bhf.org.uk/smoking

Can offer information on stopping smoking, and support for people who are finding it hard to stop.

Research shows smokers are up to four times more likely to give up if they use their local NHS Stop Smoking Service together with nicotine replacement products

Quitline® 0800 00 22 00

Or visit: www.quit.org.uk

Quitline® is a free telephone helpline staffed by trained smoking cessation counsellors. It offers help and advice about stopping smoking and information about stop smoking groups in your area.

The following helplines in different languages are available:

Bengali 0800 00 22 44
(Mondays 1pm to 9pm)

Gujarati 0800 00 22 55
(Tuesdays 1pm to 9pm)

Hindi 0800 00 22 66
(Wednesdays 1pm to 9pm)

Punjabi 0800 00 22 77
(Thursdays 1pm to 9pm)

Urdu 0800 00 22 88
(Sundays 1pm to 9pm)

Turkish and Kurdish 0800 00 22 99
(Thursdays and Sundays 1pm to 9pm)

Arabic 0800 16 91 300
(Saturdays 1pm to 9pm)

Stop smoking support groups and one-to-one support

Specialist smokers' clinics, often using nicotine replacement products or bupropion (which we describe on page 13), can improve your chances of stopping by up to four times.

Going to a group can help you to feel less alone in your attempt to quit. Being with other people who are also stopping can provide all-important mutual support, a sense of being understood and a sense of friendly competition!

Groups are usually run over a period of about six weeks and take you through the different stages of stopping. There are a growing number of NHS stop smoking services and support groups, which are available free of charge in your local community. If you don't want to join a group you may prefer one-to-one support from a trained counsellor or nurse. To find out where your nearest local NHS Stop Smoking Service or support group is, ask your GP, or ring the **free BHF Smoking Advice Line** on 0800 169 1900 or **Quitline®** on 0800 00 22 00.

Online support

If you prefer to get information from the internet, try visiting bhf.org.uk/smoking. Here you can sign-up for free email support, discuss your experiences with other quitters on a message board and find the address of your local Stop Smoking Service.

Nicotine replacement products

These products replace some of the nicotine that you used to get from smoking. Nicotine replacement is used to wean you off nicotine by replacing the very high concentrations of nicotine you get from smoking with lower doses delivered more slowly. It is a means of delivering nicotine without the tar, chemicals and other harmful elements of tobacco smoke. Nicotine replacement products reduce the cravings for cigarettes and the withdrawal symptoms associated with quitting. These products are the most thoroughly researched methods and tests have shown that, used correctly, they will double your chance of success – which is good news for those who have found withdrawal very hard on previous attempts. If you are in the habit of smoking your first cigarette within 30 minutes of waking, then you are more likely to benefit from nicotine replacement products.

To check you are using the products properly, always follow the manufacturer's instructions. If you are not sure, ask your pharmacist or doctor. Nicotine replacement products are much safer than smoking but if you have a medical condition or any health worries, are taking any other medicines, or are pregnant or considering becoming pregnant (some forms of nicotine replacement products can be used in this situation but only if you could not stop otherwise), it is important that you talk to your pharmacist or doctor first.

If you have a history of heart disease and have had difficulty giving up smoking, nicotine replacement products can normally be recommended. However, if you have had a heart attack or other cardiovascular event within the past four weeks, or if you have unstable angina, you must ask your consultant whether you should use these products. Make sure that you do not take more than the manufacturer's recommendations. And if you start smoking again, you **must** stop using the product.

There are several forms of nicotine replacement available – patches, gum, lozenges, nasal spray, inhalator and sublingual (under the tongue) tablets. All these products are available on NHS prescription. You can also buy them from pharmacists without a prescription and some are available from supermarkets and other retail outlets. Many of

these products offer programmes of support to help smokers through the quitting process.

You can choose the product that suits you best. The patch gives you a continual supply of nicotine at a low dose while you are wearing it – so you can't respond quickly to a craving or a stressful moment. The gum and the spray deliver a higher dose quickly so you can respond to a craving with a 'quick fix', as with cigarettes. If you usually smoke steadily through the day, the patch may suit you better. If you generally smoke mainly in response to cravings or stress, the gum or spray might be more flexible for you. One research study has compared the effectiveness of gum, patch, spray and inhalator and found that they are similarly effective.

Patches

A nicotine skin patch looks like a sticking plaster and is applied to dry non-hairy skin, for example on the upper arm. A patch lasts either 16 or 24 hours. Patches come in three strengths, delivering different amounts of nicotine, which is absorbed slowly through the skin. You are recommended to use the patches for 8-12 weeks, starting off with the highest strength patch. Patches are easy to use and your nicotine levels build up slowly during the day to help keep the cravings and other withdrawal symptoms away. Although you may still get urges to smoke, they are not as strong as before. The main side effects are itching

or redness of the skin. To help stop this happening, vary the position of the patch when you put a new one on. Some people may have problems with sleeping.

The usefulness of patches has been well researched. They can improve your chance of quitting by more than 50%. They are particularly helpful for people who smoke moderately (10-20 a day) and regularly through the day. If you think you are very dependent on nicotine, then another form of nicotine replacement may suit you better. If in doubt ask your pharmacist or GP for advice.



If you usually smoke steadily through the day, the patch may suit you better.

Gum

This can give you a peppery or tingling sensation in your mouth, especially to begin with, so you may have to persevere in using it. It is important to chew it properly to get the full benefit from using it. You should use about one piece an hour (say 15 pieces a day). You should chew the gum slowly and then rest it between your gum and the side of your mouth, repeatedly, for about 30 minutes. The nicotine is slowly absorbed through the lining of your mouth. The gum comes in two strengths – low (2mg) and full (4mg) – and in a choice of flavours. If the urges to smoke are not relieved enough with the low dose gum, you may need to use the full strength one. If you smoke heavily (20 or more a day) then you may need the full strength version. Gum is available without prescription from your local pharmacist. The recommended period of use is three months. The main side effect is irritation of the mouth and throat, but this lessens with use. The gum is difficult to use if you wear dentures and may irritate your stomach if you chew too vigorously.

A small number of ex-smokers find it hard to stop using the gum after the three-month period. However this is a negligible health risk and the need to use it usually decreases with time. Remember that the gum is far safer than cigarette smoking.

Nasal spray

The nicotine nasal spray comes in a bottle with a nozzle that delivers a dose of a fine spray of nicotine squirted into each nostril. It can be used up to 32 times a day (64 squirts per day). The nicotine is quickly absorbed through the lining of the nose. It closely mimics cigarettes by giving a relatively fast effect. It should be used for three months, although a small number of ex-smokers continue to use it beyond this time period. Clinical trials show that it can double your likelihood of quitting, especially if you smoke 20 or more cigarettes a day. It is particularly suitable for highly dependent smokers for whom the other products may not have such an immediate impact.

Many people find that the spray irritates the nose and throat for the first few days. It is very important you persevere with it so your nose can adjust to these sensations. After a few days' regular use you should not get any more irritation.

Tablets and lozenges

A number of tablets and lozenges containing nicotine are available. The microtab and lozenge each deliver an amount of nicotine similar to 2mg of gum. Like the gum, the nicotine is absorbed through the lining of the mouth.

Inhalator

The inhalator looks like a cigarette holder, inside which you place a cartridge containing nicotine. When you get a craving, you hold the inhalator in your hand, taking shallow puffs (as with a pipe) or deep puffs (as with a cigarette). Nicotine is taken into the mouth and the back of the throat but not into the lungs. Clinical trials have found that the inhalator also doubles your chances of quitting and is helpful if your body craves the nicotine and your hands miss the cigarette.



Clinical trials show that nasal sprays can double your likelihood of quitting.

Non-nicotine treatment

Effective non-nicotine treatment – bupropion (Zyban)

Bupropion is a non-nicotine treatment to help smokers who are motivated to quit. It is available on NHS prescription from a GP. Bupropion works in the brain to help break the addiction to nicotine. It differs from nicotine replacement products in that it does not substitute one source of nicotine with another. Bupropion reduces the cravings for cigarettes and the withdrawal symptoms associated with quitting. Clinical trials have demonstrated that bupropion doubles your chances of success.

Bupropion comes in tablet form. You take it as a two-month course of treatment and it costs the price of a prescription. Smokers should start taking bupropion while they are still smoking and set a date for quitting during the second week of treatment – for example, on day eight of taking the tablets. Tablets are usually taken once a day for the first six days, then twice a day for the remainder of the two-month treatment course (one in the morning and one in the evening).

As with any medicine, some people may get side effects while taking bupropion. The most common ones are difficulty sleeping, dry mouth and headache. These are usually mild and generally disappear within the first few weeks. Many of these effects can also be due to stopping smoking itself as your body adjusts to being without nicotine.



You should not take bupropion if you are under 18, or if you suffer from seizures (fits) or eating disorders. It is not suitable if you are pregnant or breastfeeding or if you are considering becoming pregnant. Your GP can check your medical history or any medications that you are taking and advise you if bupropion is suitable for you.

Everyone who is prescribed bupropion is offered motivational support from the Right Time™ Programme, which is a personalised programme designed to encourage and support people throughout their quit attempt. It provides tips and advice on giving up, access to specially trained QUIT® counsellors through a dedicated telephone helpline, a stop smoking action plan, and motivational letters timed to arrive at key stages in the quitting process.

If you are taking bupropion you will also have access to advice and support 24 hours a day through the Right Time™ Programme website. The site offers week-by-week advice, a support calendar and an action plan, as well as an opportunity to contact a nominated 'Stop Buddy' who can provide encouragement by email.

Glucose

There is now a small amount of evidence that glucose tablets reduce cravings and may help people to stop smoking.

Other non-nicotine products

These include capsules, dummy cigarettes, herbal cigarettes (without the nicotine but still containing damaging tar), cigarettes with filters designed to remove some of the tar and nicotine before you inhale, and mouthwashes that aim to make the taste unpleasant. There is no concrete evidence that these products are effective.



Alternative therapies

Some people claim to be helped by alternative therapies. However, their effectiveness remains unproven. The two most popular forms are hypnotherapy and acupuncture. If you decide to try alternative therapy, it is important to find a registered practitioner. Contact:

The Institute of Complementary Medicine,
PO Box 194,
London SE16 7QZ.

Phone: 020 7237 5165

Website: www.icmedicine.co.uk

or:

The British Complementary Medicine Association,
PO Box 5122

Bournemouth

BH8 OWG

Phone: 0845 345 5977

Website: www.bcma.co.uk

Both of these organisations can supply further information on the services available and details of local practitioners.

The British Heart Foundation cannot accept responsibility for referrals or advice offered by either of these bodies. As a result you should check the competence, registration, insurance and background of any complementary therapists.



If you decide to try alternative therapy, it is important to find a registered practitioner

Diet and exercise

Many people who want to give up smoking are concerned about the possibility of putting on weight. The majority of smokers will gain weight once they quit smoking, but the long-term weight gain is on average only 6 to 8 pounds (about 3 to 4 kilos) for each smoker who quits. Compared with the risk of continuing to smoke, this is a minor health risk.

However, if you continue to eat exactly what you ate before you stopped smoking then you should not put on much weight. If you change what you eat so that you don't take in so much

energy (calories), and also increase how much exercise you take, you will lose weight. Also, improved lung function and some of the other health benefits of giving up smoking are likely to make exercise both easier and more beneficial.

Both diet and exercise have an important effect on your body. Stopping smoking is a major change for the body to adapt to. Following a healthy diet and doing regular exercise suitable to your level of fitness may help your body cope with withdrawal and boost your sense of self-confidence and well being.



Cutting down or stopping outright?

All our experience tells us that cutting down is much less likely to work than simply stopping outright. Once you get down to six to ten cigarettes a day, you'll find it very hard to give up completely and you will probably puff longer and harder on them so there is no real health gain. Unfortunately, even if you do manage to cut down, the numbers tend to creep back up again. So once you have planned ahead and chosen your date, it is better to stop outright.

Following a healthy diet and doing regular exercise may help your body cope with withdrawal and boost your sense of well being.



Please help us to carry on saving lives, become a supporter of the BHF today

Who are the BHF?

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) is the nation's heart charity and raises funds for pioneering research that saves and improves the lives of people who have been affected by heart disease. Our aim is to ensure heart and circulatory disease is no longer a major cause of death in the UK.

What does the BHF do?

Research

We currently fund over 1,200 research projects, looking at every aspect of heart disease – from causes and safer drugs to improving surgical techniques.

Care

Our team of BHF Nurses visit heart patients in their homes offering medical assistance and emotional support.

Information

The Heart HelpLine (0300 330 3311) provides heart patients and their families with detailed and reliable information to help them cope with their condition.

Education

We teach children and adults about healthy eating and lifestyles that can help to reduce their risks of developing heart and circulatory disease.

Help us to keep hearts beating

We rely heavily on the general public to fund our work. In fact, over 80% of our total income is generated in this way.

Heart disease can strike at any time. That's why we desperately need you to help us fight this awful disease.

Please make a donation today.

Please complete the form below and send it with your donation to **British Heart Foundation, Supporter Services, Greater London House, 180 Hampstead Road, London NW1 7AW.**

Please accept my gift as indicated:

£10 £15 £25 Other: £

Please make your cheque/postal order/CAF voucher payable to: **British Heart Foundation**

Or please debit the above sum from my:

CAF Charity Card/MasterCard/Visa/Delta/Maestro

(delete as applicable)

Card number

Valid from

Expiry date

Issue no (Switch/Maestro only)

Signature

Date

To save costs we will only acknowledge your donation if you tick this box.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode

Email _____

- Please tick this box if you would like to receive email communications about the future activities of the BHF, via the email address you have provided (MP07)

giftaid it

If you are a UK taxpayer you can add an extra 28p for every £1 you donate at no extra cost to you.

- Yes, I am a UK taxpayer and would like the British Heart Foundation (BHF) to reclaim the tax on all the donations I have made since 6 April 2000 and all donations I make in the future as Gift Aid donations. (GA1)

Today's date _____

- No, I am not a UK taxpayer (This is so that we don't write to you about Gift Aid again). (GA2)

For the BHF to reclaim the tax on your donation you have to be paying at least 28p in UK income or capital gains tax for every £1 you donate. Please note Gift Aid can only be claimed on individual personal donations and not collections. Please notify us of any changes in your details.

Other ways to get involved

There are lots of different ways to support the BHF, you'll find all the BHF contact details you'll need below.

For more information about the BHF credit card call **0800 028 2440** or online at bhf.org.uk/card.

For sponsored bike rides, and walks, find out how you can get involved in BHF events call **0845 1308 663** or online at bhf.org.uk/events.

For more information on volunteering for the BHF call **020 7554 0000** or online at bhf.org.uk/volunteer.

What happens to your personal information

The BHF will use your personal information for administration purposes and to provide you with services, products and any information that you have requested.

- We greatly value your support and would like to keep you informed about our work through marketing literature in order to help our charitable aims. We may contact you by phone or post for this purpose. Please tick if you would prefer **not** to hear from the BHF in this way. (S)
- We may want to share your information with other organisations that are in partnership with the BHF and share our aims and objectives. Please tick the box if you would prefer us **not** to share your details. (MP02)

bhf.org.uk

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Heart HelpLine: 0300 330 3311 *(a local rate number)*

An information service for the public and health professionals on issues relating to heart health.

Further information

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) also produces other educational materials that may be of interest to you. To find out about these or to order your Heart health catalogue please go to **bhf.org.uk/publications** or call the BHF Orderline on **0870 600 6566** or email **orderline@bhf.org.uk**. Many of our publications are downloadable from **bhf.org.uk/publications**

Give something back

We do not charge for our educational materials, but a donation will help us to help others.

Have your say

We would welcome your comments to help us produce the best information for you. Why not let us know what you think? Contact us via our website **bhf.org.uk/yoursay**

Other useful contacts

**The free BHF Smoking Advice Line
0800 169 1900**

bhf.org.uk/smoking

Can offer information on stopping smoking, and support for people who are finding it hard to stop.

QUIT[®],

211 Old Street

London EC1V 9NR

Quitline: **0800 00 22 00**

Website: **www.quit.org.uk**

QUIT also produces a booklet called *How to quit smoking without putting on weight*.

ASH (Action on Smoking and Health)

102 Clifton Street

London EC2A 4HW

Phone: **020 7739 5902**

Website: **www.ash.org.uk**

British Heart Foundation

Greater London House
180 Hampstead Road
London NW1 7AW

Phone: 020 7554 0000

Fax: 020 7554 0100

Website: bhf.org.uk

