

# LEARNING TO COPE: SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU QUIT TOBACCO

## PREVENTING URGES

You can prepare for tempting situations or triggers.

- Plan ahead. Know what you will do before you encounter it. Practice that plan often.
- Avoid the situation until you feel you can deal with it.
- Change the routines you associate with smoking as much as possible.
- Keep yourself busy. Avoid situations where you may begin to think about smoking.
- Remind yourself often that you are happy being a nonsmoker.

## WHEN A CRAVING HITS: GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

- Deep Breathing. Every time an urge hits take in a slow deep breath, hold it for three to five seconds and then slowly exhale.
- Drink some water.
- Talk about the urge. Call your support person or let people around you know you need to talk for a few minutes.
- Say to yourself, "I am in control" or "I can get through this." Positive self-talk works!
- It's natural that you will have thoughts about cigarettes once you quit. Just accept the thought and move on.

## AFTER MEALS

- Brush your teeth right away after every meal.
- Take a short walk after each meal.

## ALCOHOL

- Explore alternative ways to socialize with friends.
- Remind yourself that you can have fun without drinking. Millions of people do it all the time!
- If you do choose to drink, try changing what you usually drink, and limiting yourself to one or two drinks.

## BOREDOM

- Always carry a book/newspaper/puzzle with you.
- Plan ahead so that you will not have long periods of inactivity.

- Write letters or your "to-do" list.
- Start a new hobby or begin an exercise program to fill the time.

## CAR

- Choose a slightly different route for routine trips.
- Listen to the radio or books on tape to keep your mind occupied.

## COFFEE

- If you always have your morning coffee with a cigarette, try delaying having the coffee or drink your coffee in a different place.
- Drink tea or a different beverage for the first few weeks instead of coffee.

## EVENINGS

- Find projects to do. Clean your place. Help someone or volunteer.
- Keep yourself occupied while watching TV. Do puzzles, read a magazine.
- Visit family or friends instead of staying at home.
- Start an exercise program. If you can't do anything else, take a brisk half hour walk each night.

## HAND/MOUTH

- Use cinnamon sticks (the kind used for cider).
- Suck on sugar free candy or chew sugar free gum.
- Use straws, swizzle sticks, toothpicks.
- Eat carrots, celery sticks, grapes, or other healthy snacks.

## MORNING ROUTINE

- Change the order of your routine.
- Jump into the shower as soon as you get up.
- Eat something for breakfast if you normally do not.
- Look in the mirror first thing each morning and say, "I'm proud to be a nonsmoker!"

## OTHER SMOKERS

- Avoid places where you know people are smoking for the first few weeks of your quit.
- Politely explain to the person that you are trying to quit and ask them not to smoke around you.

## PARTIES/SOCIALIZING

- Before you go, develop and practice a plan to deal with situation.
- Rehearse going to the function. Close your eyes and see yourself having a good time, without a cigarette.
- Practice saying "No thank you, I don't smoke" just in case someone offers you a cigarette.
- Don't drink alcohol if that is a trigger for you.
- Have a support person with you at the party.

## STRESS MANAGEMENT/NEGATIVE MOOD

- Separate cigarettes from the situation. Realize that smoking never made a situation any better or helped you deal with it.
- Step back, take a deep breath, and say to yourself, "I can handle this."
- Strategize about how to handle stressful situations with friends, relatives or other support persons before encountering those situations.
- Begin an exercise program, take a formal stress management class or learn to meditate.

## PHONECALLS

- Stand instead of sit.
- Hold the phone in the hand opposite of the one you usually use.
- Limit your time on the phone.

## WEIGHT GAIN

- Remember, the average weight gain, as a direct result of quitting, is only five to seven pounds.
- Prepare by having healthy snacks available prior to your quit. Carrots, celery sticks, grapes, plain popcorn, raisins, dried fruit, etc.
- Drink six to eight glasses of water a day.
- Begin a modest exercise or walking program.

## WORK

- Put a "No Smoking" sign or motivation poster in your work area.
- Change your work routine as much as possible.
- Take your break at a different time.
- If you usually smoke outdoors, stay inside during your break. Read or work on a crossword puzzle.
- Listen to music that soothes you.
- Have a support person at work.
- Realize that you don't need an excuse to take a break. You deserve it!