

Quit Smoking

Each year more than 160 million Americans make New Year's resolutions. The American Lung Association reports that quitting smoking is the most common resolution.

And according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there are 50 million more former smokers than current smokers. Those successful quitters have utilized high levels of determination and developed a quit plan to kick the habit. Engage in some of these helpful tips to be smoke-free for the New Year.

EFFECTIVE QUIT PLAN

Many smokers who decide to use the cold turkey method — giving up cigarettes all at once — often fail. Quitting cold turkey will cause nicotine withdrawal symptoms that may include insomnia, irritability, poor concentration and headaches.

If you think these withdrawals are too much for you, there are still effective ways to go about quitting. According to the CDC, a quit plan should include:

- **Picking a quit date.** Plan to cut down on your level of nicotine so you can meet your goal.



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- **A support group.** Telling family and friends about your decision will give them reason to help keep you motivated.

- **A list of reasons.** Make a physical list of the reasons you want to quit smoking. Put this list in places where you tend to smoke more.

FREE RESOURCES

A support system is crucial

in a fight against nicotine withdrawal. The CDC has listed a few helpful resources to use when you're up against a craving. 1-800-QUIT-NOW is a great service to offer coaching, assist in a quit plan and provide you educational materials. Smokefree TXT is a text message service that will give you advice and motivation. Get in the habit of sending this ser-

vice a text when you feel a craving come on.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

There are many different medications available to assist in quitting smoking. The downside to some over-the-counter medicines is that you will still rely on nicotine. Products such as patches or gums will release levels of nicotine in your bloodstream to relieve the

craving without the dangerous chemicals that come from burning cigarettes.

Consult with your doctor to determine which product will work best for you. There are other prescription medications available that you can choose. Talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits of each before you begin your journey to become smoke-free.