



# Smoking Cessation

## Did you know....

It takes an average of 6-8 quit attempts before a smoker finally quits! Do not give up on quitting!

There are more than 7,000 chemicals in tobacco smoke and at least 69 that are harmful to humans and can cause cell damage, cell death and cancer.

**2 weeks after you quit** Blood circulation in your gums and teeth are similar to a nonsmoker. Anger, anxiety and irritability from nicotine withdrawal go away. Cravings and urges should be shorter and less frequent.

**1–3 months after you quit** Your heart attack risk has started to drop and your lung function is better. The blood circulation in your body has improved and walking might be easier. If you had a cough when you smoked, the cough should be better or gone

**1–9 months after you quit** Smoking-related nasal congestion, fatigue, and shortness of breath should be improving. Cilia (little hairs in the lungs, throat and nose) have re-grown in your lungs and can clean your lungs to remove irritants and mucous, and reduce infections.

**1 year after you quit** The risk of cardiovascular disease, heart attack, and stroke has dropped to less than half that of a smoker.

**10–15 years after you quit** Your risk of having a stroke, heart attack, pancreatic cancer, and tooth loss has dropped to a similar rate as a nonsmoker. Your risk of mouth, throat, and esophageal cancer has reduced significantly. Your risk of lung cancer is 30-50% less than a continuing smoker's risk. Your risk of death from lung cancer is one-half of the risk if you were an average smoker (one pack per day). Your risk of pancreatic cancer is similar to a person who has not smoked and your risk of mouth, throat, and esophageal cancer has reduced significantly. Your risk of tooth loss has decreased to a rate similar to someone who has never smoked.

**20 years after you quit (women)** Your risk of death from smoking-related causes, including cancer and lung disease, is the same as a person who never smoked.

## Coping with Cravings

Cravings will fade after about 5-10 minutes, even if you do not smoke. Think "This will not last, the urge will go away" or "I would like a cigarette, but I am not going to have one, because I do not need one."

- Remove yourself from the situation or event that led to the urge.
- Avoid situations where you will be tempted to smoke.
- Distract yourself.

## Self-Assessment

Mark off the reasons you want to quit tobacco products:

- Breathe better
- Reduce my risk of cancer, heart attack or stroke
- Improve circulation of blood to my legs and arms
- Reduce my risk of emphysema/chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Smell better
- Improve my sense of smell and taste
- Save money
- Set a good example for loved ones
- Other:

At MedStar NRH you can work with the medical team and psychologist to develop a plan to quit smoking. This can include medications or learning to change your thoughts and behaviors to reduce smoking.