

## December Newsletter

### New Years Resolutions- making one that will stick!

We hope you have had a wonderful holiday season up to this point. As New Years is fast approaching we thought we should provide some pointers on making an effective resolution. One study suggested that 67% of the population makes 3 or more resolutions and that 63% were successful at keeping their resolutions at the 2 month mark. Here are some thoughts to boost your success rates!

1. Make your goals realistic- Don't place a goal of losing 50 pounds. Start with 10 or 15 pounds and if you succeed you can raise the bar. But setting yourself up for unrealistic or too lofty of a goal makes your chances of success low. Also don't try to tackle too much at once- one resolution at a time will increase your chances of success.
2. Plan ahead - Know what makes you fail and try to avoid those situations. If going to the bar makes you smoke or driving by Krispy Kremes is too difficult then change your habits to prevent failure. Look for help in different ways such as friends or positive thinking approaches or other mental health tips. Being in a good frame of mind before you start will increase your chance for success and visualization exercises can be helpful as well!
3. List the pros and cons- Before you start, remind yourself why you are trying to **make the** change, keep these reasons in the back of your mind and use them to remind yourself and give you strength in times of weakness!
4. Psyche yourself up- Start talking to others- tell them about your plan- maybe they want to do the same thing and you will find a friend to help you along the way. But the more people **that know, the more motivation you will have** to stick with your resolution.
5. Persistence pays off- According to some experts it takes 21 days for something to become a habit and 6 months for it to become part of your personality. So keep that in mind and keep up with it and don't let your guard down. Failure or a backslide can occur when you least expect it.
6. Enlist a family member or friend to help- Even if they don't want to join in on the same resolution- someone who will call in to check on you and provide accountability or support when you need it can be very helpful. That extra push can make a big difference.
7. Don't let a bad day ruin the whole plan- Most people will not go without backsliding whether it be a day without exercise, a cigarette, or a doughnut at the wrong time. Don't despair- you can try again and start the next day. Stick to your guns and look for support!
8. Keep track of your progress- Whether it be losing weight gradually and keeping track of your weights and your food diary, or watching the minutes you exercise or increasing the speed of your treadmill jog every bit counts. Focus on the positive and don't beat yourself up if your progress is slower than expected.
9. Treat yourself when you make progress- That doesn't mean go have a Big Mac- but try to find different ways to treat yourself. Buy a nice piece of clothing for your new size from your weight loss. Go for a special dinner or date to celebrate!
10. If at first you don't succeed try and try again!- New Years Resolutions can start at any time of the year. If now is not ideal make the start day 2 weeks or 2 months from now. Also learn from your mistakes and regroup to try again. It can often take more than one attempt to succeed at change and just take some credit for trying in the first place.

## Sources

<http://ibdcrohns.about.com/cs/mentalhealth/a/newyearresolve.htm>

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_12076\\_keep-new-years.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_12076_keep-new-years.html)

Quitting smoking tips - Since it is one of the most popular things to do for your new year's resolution take a look at some of the following tips to help you. Let us know if you have any other questions on your best approach or if you want to consider medications to help.

Why Not Smoke? Taken from <http://www.healthauthority.com/TobaccoDependence>.

Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, accounting for over 400,000 deaths each year. If you smoke, you can improve your health and lengthen your life more by quitting smoking than by making any other lifestyle change (diet, exercise, stress management, etc.).

If you are a smoker, you have: 22 times the risk of dying from lung cancer if male, 12 times the risk of dying from lung cancer if female, 10 times the risk of dying from bronchitis and emphysema, 2 to 3 times the risk of heart disease, and 2 times the risk of stroke

The good news is that, regardless of how long you've smoked, quitting and staying quit can improve your health risks.

Want to cut your health risks in half? Those quitting before age 50 reduce the risk of death in the next 15 years by half. Those **that have** quit for 10 years reduce the risk of lung cancer by almost half. Those **that have** quit for 1 year reduce the risk of coronary heart disease by half. Want to have the risk of a nonsmoker? Quit for 15 years and you have the same risk of coronary heart disease as a nonsmoker. Quit for 10 years and you have the same risk of stroke as a nonsmoker. Quit for 1 day and your pulse and blood pressure return to their baseline levels.

What is the best way to quit?

Cold turkey vs. Gradual Reduction.

There are 2 different approaches to quitting smoking and they each have their merit. Many experts agree that the more you smoke (generally a pack a day or more) the more of an issue you have with nicotine addiction and tapering may be more successful. That being said, more people do try cold turkey (stopping immediately from smoking altogether) and have success that way as well. If you try the gradual approach then scheduled smoking rather than just a decrease in the number of cigarettes a day at your preferred times not to smoke is better. When you say you can only smoke every hour rather than right after a meal or with your coffee it helps to break the habits as well. Also start taking the pleasurable things associated with smoking away from smoking. Examples of this include avoiding smoking in the house, not taking "smoke breaks" with other people, no drinking coffee while smoking and no talking on the phone while smoking- taking these things away while smoking will help make it less desirable.

Most of the following is straight from

[http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit\\_smoking/how\\_to\\_quit/you\\_can\\_quit/five\\_keys/](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/how_to_quit/you_can_quit/five_keys/) with some extra tips added in.

**What increases your chance of success?** You need to be committed to quitting. Until you are ready your chances to succeed are not as high. Try not to do it the midst of a higher than

normal stress time in your life. Finally, follow the recommendations below for help.

**1. Get Ready Set a quit date and change your environment.** Get rid of ALL cigarettes and ashtrays in your home, car, and place of work. Don't let people smoke in your home. Consider cleaning your teeth/dry clean your clothes and detail your car- giving you more reasons to stay quit. Review your past attempts to quit. Think about what worked and what did not.

**2. Once you quit, don't smoke—NOT EVEN A PUFF!** If you do slip up don't beat yourself up but try to resolve not to do it again.

**3. Get Support and Encouragement-** Studies have shown that you have a better chance of being successful if you have help. You can get support in many ways: Tell your family, friends, and co-workers that you are going to quit and want their support. Ask them not to smoke around you or leave cigarettes out where you can see them. Talk to us! We do have several options to discuss if you want help. Get individual, group, or telephone counseling.

Counseling doubles your chances of success and you can get free telephone counseling at 1-800-QUIT-NOW and at <http://www.coquitline.org/> . The more help you have, the better your chances are of quitting.

#### **4. Learn New Skills and Behaviors**

Try to distract yourself from urges to smoke. Talk to someone, go for a walk, or get busy with a task. When you first try to quit, change your routine. Use a different route to work. Drink tea instead of coffee. Eat breakfast in a different place. Do something to reduce your stress. Take a hot bath, exercise, or read a book. Plan something enjoyable to do every day. Drink a lot of water and other fluids.

#### **5. Get Medication and Use It Correctly**

Medications can help you stop smoking and lessen the urge to smoke. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved seven medications to help you quit smoking and <http://www.coquitline.org/> may be able to help you get free nicotine replacement therapy.

1. Bupropion SR—Available by prescription.
  2. Nicotine gum—Available over-the-counter.
  3. Nicotine inhaler—Available by prescription.
  4. Nicotine nasal spray—Available by prescription.
  5. Nicotine patch—Available by prescription and over-the-counter- there are several studies that suggest it is the most successful nicotine replacement approach to quitting smoking.
  6. Nicotine lozenge—Available over-the-counter.
  7. Chantix (Varenicline tartrate)—Available by prescription.
- Ask us for advice if you need more information and carefully read the information on the package. All of these medications will at least double your chances of quitting and quitting for good.
  - Nearly everyone who is trying to quit can benefit from using a medication. However, if you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant, nursing, under age 18, smoking fewer than 10 cigarettes per day, or have a medical condition, talk to us before taking medications.

#### **6. Be Prepared for Relapse or Difficult Situations**

Most relapses occur within the first three months after quitting. Don't be discouraged if you

start smoking again. Remember, most people try several times before they finally quit. The following are some difficult situations you may encounter: Avoid drinking alcohol. Drinking lowers your chances of success. Being around smoking can make you want to smoke. Many smokers will gain some weight when they quit, usually less than 10 pounds. Eat a healthy diet and stay active. Don't let weight gain distract you from your main goal—quitting smoking. There are a lot of ways to improve your mood other than smoking. Some smoking cessation medications also lessen depression.

If you are having problems with any of these situations, talk to your doctor or other health care provider. For more information on quitting, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visit [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov) and <http://www.coquitline.org/>