

Ex-Smokers' Nutrition Survival Kit

Many smokers miss having something in their mouths or hands.

To manage those cravings, keep these items easily available in your purse, desk, in the car or wherever you usually used to smoke!

- Carrot sticks
- Celery sticks
- Fresh fruit
- Water
- Popcorn (unbuttered)
- Pretzels
- Chewing gum
- Hard candy
- Tic tacs
- Mint toothpicks
- Plastic straws



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www.dietitians.ca

Nutrition Tips for quitting smoking without gaining weight!



Congratulations on your decision to quit smoking!

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health. It will help reduce your risk of developing cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as well as some cancers.

Some people are worried about gaining weight once they quit smoking. It is true that some smokers gain 5-6 pounds when they quit, but not everyone does. Research has found that your metabolism slows down when you quit smoking. When you were smoking it was kept artificially high. Therefore, when you quit, your metabolism returns to normal and your body burns calories more slowly. Poor eating habits and lack of regular physical activity can also contribute to weight gain.

Try the following nutrition tips from Registered Dietitians, and start overcoming the challenges of quitting, while adopting healthy habits, which will put you on track for a healthier life!

Try not to worry about your weight. Remember that quitting smoking is much better for your health than continuing to smoke. You would have to gain 80-100 pounds to offset the benefits of quitting smoking!

Eat well with several small meals throughout the day

Food will smell and taste better when you have stopped smoking and you may want to eat more as a way to cope with your nicotine cravings. Everyday, eat several smaller meals plus snacks, including a variety of whole grains, vegetables, fruits, lower fat milk products, leaner meats and meat alternatives. Instead of greasy, salty snack foods choose lower calorie foods such as unbuttered popcorn and pretzels. If you skip meals, you may be more likely to crave nicotine and overeat later in the day.

Drink lots of fluids, but cut back on caffeine and alcohol

Try to make water your drink of choice! Water helps to flush the nicotine from your body during the first few days of quitting. If you need some variety, other good choices include low fat milk, 100% fruit or vegetable juice, mineral or soda water.

Try to avoid drinks with caffeine. Coffee, tea, and colas all contain caffeine and can increase the “jitters” that are often a side effect of nicotine withdrawal. If you can’t live without these beverages, perhaps try drinking a decaffeinated version.

Avoid drinking alcohol until you have successfully quit smoking. Many people find that alcohol triggers a cigarette craving, especially if you used to drink and smoke at the same time.



Enjoy physical activity

Adding in daily physical activity will help maintain a healthy weight, increase your energy throughout the day, relieve stress and help you to feel good about yourself and your body as you quit smoking. You may want to join a fitness class, join a sports team, or simply start walking, running or biking around your neighbourhood.

Other easy ways to get in your activity include:

- Walking whenever you can – parking at the back end of the parking lot or taking the stairs instead of taking the elevator.
- Take a few minutes to stretch and bend at work.
- Walk or bicycle instead of driving for shorter trips.



Change your daily routine to avoid relapse

Smokers often connect their cigarettes with certain situations and when you're quitting you may try to replace that cigarette with food. For example, many smokers have a cigarette with their morning coffee. Try to change up your routine by having a glass of water, 100% fruit juice or herbal tea. If you are used to having a cigarette after a meal, instead of lingering and reaching for the cookie jar, try to get up and have a glass of water, go for a walk or do the dishes. By avoiding or changing your regular routine, substituting healthy foods when you want to snack or smoke, or using activity to keep you busy, you can help prevent your cravings and your snack attacks.