



# Stopping smoking

FACT SHEET prepared by The Asthma Foundation

**“Tobacco smoking is a major health problem in New Zealand. Overall, around 23% of New Zealanders smoke tobacco. However smoking prevalence is much higher among Maori (46%) and Pacific peoples (36%). Smoking is directly linked to almost 5,000 deaths a year and contributes to socio-economic and ethnic inequalities in health in New Zealand. Second hand smoke also has known harmful health effects on young children.**

**Stopping smoking is the best thing that a person can do for their health — now and in the future. It is never too late to stop smoking.”**

*New Zealand Smoking Cessation Guidelines 2007*

## ***Why should I quit smoking?***

It is important to be clear about why YOU want to stop smoking and your reasons need be personal and for you alone. Some examples are:

- ✱ to improve my health (*so that I won't have a heart attack/cancer/stroke and die before seeing my grandchildren/mokopuna grow up like my Dad did*)
- ✱ to stop my health getting any worse (*stop my chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)/heart disease/diabetes getting any worse*)
- ✱ to improve my fitness (*so that I can play a full game of touch/so that I can play at the park with my grandchildren/mokopuna*)
- ✱ to take control (*I don't like the cigarette controlling ME!*)
- ✱ to save money (*I could fly to Australia to see my son/daughter with the \$4,500 a year saved from not smoking 20 cigarettes a day*)
- ✱ to improve my appearance (*my skin won't be dry and grey and prematurely wrinkled*)
- ✱ to keep warm in winter (*I won't need to keep going outside for a smoke!*)

Write your reasons down and put them somewhere that you can remind yourself of WHY you want to quit smoking when the going gets a bit tough.

Some people are successful in their first attempt to stop smoking. Others may take up to 14 attempts. Lessons can be learned from previous attempts and applied to the next attempt.

## ***How can I get help to quit smoking?***

- ✱ telephone the Quitline 0800 778 778 or visit [www.quit.org.nz](http://www.quit.org.nz)
- ✱ contact Aukati Kai Paipa — smoking cessation service provided by Maori for Maori who smoke. Visit [http://www.auahikore.org.nz/contacts/quit\\_providers.htm](http://www.auahikore.org.nz/contacts/quit_providers.htm) to find out your closest provider.
- ✱ talk to your doctor, practice nurse or other health professional for advice on local smoking cessation providers
- ✱ join a smoking cessation group

## ***Some tips to quit smoking***

### **Plan ahead**

- ✱ think about — when do I smoke? Why do I smoke? Keeping a smoking diary might help you work these things out
- ✱ think about — what could I do instead at these times? And plan for your most risky times
- ✱ think about — do I want to go cold turkey (stopping suddenly and completely) or do I want to cut down?
- ✱ think about new ways to handle stress and strong emotions

### **Set a date to quit**

- ✱ find a quitting partner
- ✱ get help from family and friends
- ✱ choose a time when you are not under a lot of pressure
- ✱ think about getting rid of all smoking equipment
- ✱ think about using medication to help in your quit attempt – Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) or oral medication (talk to Quitline, your quit advisor or your doctor about what is right for you)
- ✱ if you are cutting down remember you still need to set a quit date

### **Remember the 4D's**

These help when you get the craving to smoke. Remember cravings only last a few minutes. They may be strong but they do get fewer and eventually fade away. And just ONE will hurt! Having “just one” is the way that most people go back to regular smoking.

- ✱ **Delay** acting on the urge to smoke. After five minutes, the urge to smoke weakens and your determination to quit will come back
- ✱ **Deep breath.** Take a long slow breath in and breathe slowly out again. Repeat three times
- ✱ **Drink water.** Sip it slowly, holding it in your mouth a little longer to savour the taste. Carry a drink bottle with you
- ✱ **Do something else.** Take your mind off wanting to smoke by taking action – put on music, go for a walk or ring a friend

### ***The Asthma Foundation can help you***

The Asthma Foundation is New Zealand's not-for-profit sector authority on asthma and other respiratory illnesses. We advocate to government and raise awareness of respiratory illnesses, fund research for better treatments and educate on best practice.

Check out our comprehensive website at [www.asthmafoundation.org.nz](http://www.asthmafoundation.org.nz)

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