



STOP SMOKING FOR BETTER HEALTH— TAKE THE FIRST STEP TODAY

HUMAN RESOURCES - WORKPLACE WELLNESS

THINKING ABOUT QUITTING SMOKING?

For many people smoking is part of their daily lives and, therefore, it typically takes them several attempts to successfully quit for life. On average, a person makes 30 attempts (porcupinehu.on.ca). If you are thinking about quitting, do not fear a possible relapse as each quit attempt can help you learn about yourself, your smoking patterns, triggers and the coping mechanisms that you have learned. Because of this, every subsequent attempt typically becomes easier. Quitting smoking is a journey that you do not need to go on alone; reach out to family and friends for support.

WHY IS IT DIFFICULT TO QUIT?

Cigarettes and other tobacco products contain nicotine which is a very addictive drug. Nicotine addiction involves physical and psychological factors that can make it more difficult to stop smoking/using tobacco products. Nicotine releases chemicals in the brain that create a euphoric feeling that is common to addictive drugs. This euphoric feeling is the primary driver for the addiction. Your brain and your body become used to the effects of nicotine and it typically leads to smoking more often to avoid withdrawal symptoms. During times of withdrawal, an individual might experience symptoms such as tiredness, irritability, hunger and cravings when they encounter smoking triggers.

Triggers can be common places, activities, emotions and even people that you may associate with smoking and which therefore signal to you to smoke.

WHY SHOULD YOU CONSIDER QUITTING SMOKING?

#1 Health Benefits

The euphoric feeling/effect of the nicotine only lasts a few minutes, but it can have long-term impacts on your health:

- Smoking is one of the leading causes of preventable disease in Canada.
- Smoking is the leading cause of lung cancer in Canada and is linked to over 15 other types of cancer, including mouth, nasal cavity, esophageal, kidney and liver (Canadian Cancer Society, 2020). Quitting smoking can significantly lower the risk of developing these cancers.
- Women who smoke are at a higher risk of developing breast cancer.
- Quitting smoking can also decrease your risk of developing chronic diseases such as heart attack, stroke, aortic aneurism, and lung disease.

While smoking and tobacco have both short-term and long-term health effects, the good news is that the body begins to restore its equilibrium within 20 minutes of quitting (Smokers Helpline, 2020). The health risks decrease with each smoke-free day while life expectancy increases. The following figure highlights how your body bounces back, from the minute you stop smoking.



20 MINUTES AFTER QUITTING:
Your blood pressure and pulse rate will return to normal.



8 HOURS AFTER QUITTING:
You will notice that you can breathe easier. Your oxygen levels will be back to normal and your chance of having a heart attack will decrease.



24 HOURS AFTER QUITTING:
Your lungs will start to clear out the mucus. All that coughing will be a good sign.



48 HOURS AFTER QUITTING:
You will be nicotine-free. Your senses of taste and smell will improve so you will probably start to enjoy food more.



72 HOURS AFTER QUITTING:
You will have more energy. Your lung capacity will increase and your bronchial tubes will relax, so breathing and exercising will get easier.



1 YEAR AFTER QUITTING:
Your risk of having a heart attack will drop by 50%



10 YEARS AFTER QUITTING:
Your risk of dying from lung cancer will be cut in half.



10-15 YEARS AFTER QUITTING:
Your risk of coronary heart disease will be the same as the risk for someone who has never smoked.



Source: Canadian Cancer Society (smokershelpline.ca)



University
of Windsor

WORKPLACE
WELLNESS



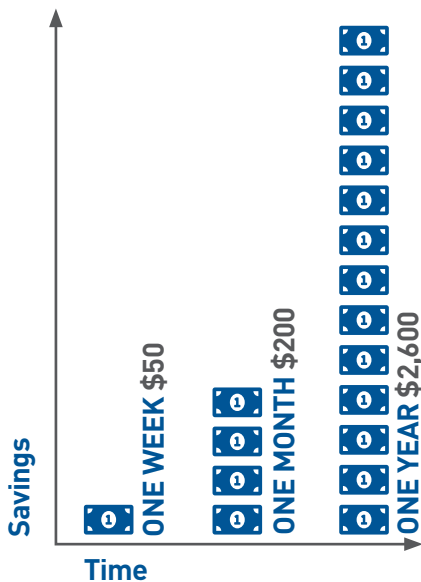
STOP SMOKING FOR BETTER HEALTH—TAKE THE FIRST STEP TODAY

HUMAN RESOURCES - WORKPLACE WELLNESS

#2 Financial Benefits

Smoking can have negative effects not only on one's health but also on one's financial wellbeing. Have you ever calculated how much it costs to smoke? In Ontario, smokers consume approximately 12 cigarettes on average or a half of a pack per day (Canadian Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey [CTADS]: Summary of Results for 2017).

Using \$15 as the approximate cost of a pack of cigarettes in Canada, someone who smokes a half of a pack a day could save approximately \$50 per week, \$200 per month, and \$2,600 per year.



For many individuals, this could be the equivalent of:

DURATION (based on smoking ½ pack/day)	EXPENSE (based on \$15/pack)	ALTERNATE USE OF MONEY SPENT
1 day	\$7	4 cups of coffee/tea at a coffee shop
1 week	\$50	Dinner at a nice restaurant, tickets to a show or a concert
1 month	\$200	Car payment, groceries, gym membership, dance lessons, road trip, adopting a pet
1 year	\$2600	Vacation get away, home renovations, new laptop or a new home appliance
5 years	\$13,000	A down payment on a car or home, investment in an educational fund/retirement.

Other potential financial benefits include:

- Reduced home and life insurance premiums - some insurance companies offer a discount on home and life insurance premiums to non-smokers (Health Canada, 2016)
- Reduced costs of home maintenance - when someone smokes in the home, tar, nicotine and other chemicals coat surfaces and seep into fabrics. Quitting smoking could help reduce the maintenance costs of cleaning vents and air filtration repairs, and could help prolong the quality of items in the home such as bedding, furniture and curtains.

#3 Benefits to People Close to You

By quitting smoking you can also protect the people in your family/social circle from being exposed to second-hand smoke. Those

in your close social circle, such as family members and friends, are also susceptible to health conditions and illnesses caused by exposure to second-hand smoke. Second-hand smoke contains harmful chemicals, carcinogens and carbon monoxide. There is no safe level of second-hand smoke, therefore, by quitting smoking, you can protect those close to you.

ARE YOU READY TO QUIT?

In addition to reflecting on the many benefits associated with quitting, before making the decision to start this journey you should:

- Make a list of the reasons for quitting and repeat these reasons to yourself every morning.
- Make a list of people that you can reach out to for support and reach out to them.
- Enhance your knowledge of smoking triggers, withdrawals symptoms and identify potential coping strategies that you will use to manage these.
- Think about what you will do with the money you save and the positive impacts of quitting in your personal and professional life.

After doing this, if you feel that you are ready to start the journey, set a target date for quitting and stick to it. Should you determine that now is not the right time to quit, that is okay. You may want to do some more reading, reach out to experts, learn more about supports available through health benefits, etc. Set a timeline to revisit your decision in the future.

Quitting smoking can have significant positive effects not only on your health but also on the wellbeing of others around you. For more information, or for a listing of the sources consulted to write this publication, please visit:

UWINDSOR.CA/WORKPLACEWELLNESS



University of Windsor

WORKPLACE WELLNESS