

Inova TobaccoNET

Overcoming the Urge for Nicotine

Listed below are several urge-conquering techniques that can help you overcome your desire to use tobacco. Use these methods when the craving begins. The sooner you take action, the easier it is to prevent relapse. **Remember, the urge for nicotine will pass!**

- Deep breathing. Inhale deeply, hold the air for three seconds, then slowly exhale. Repeat three or four times.
- Leave the area when an urge hits. If possible, go to another room, get a drink of water, step outside for a minute. If you can't physically leave the area, use your mind to transport you to a place that is beautiful and relaxing.
- Envision yourself as tobacco-free, full of energy and vitality. See yourself with healthier skin, whiter teeth, cleaner lungs and devoid of the stench of stale tobacco smoke. Imagine yourself achieving new levels of physical fitness.
- Smell the cigarettes you've collected in your jar.
- Repeat your affirmations: *I am tobacco-free.—I am in control of my life—I am willing to release this addiction—I have respect for my body and will treat it well.*
- Brush your teeth frequently and use mouthwash. Having a clean mouth taste will help you resist the temptation to use tobacco.
- Chew sugarless gum or chew on a straw or toothpick (Stimudent).
- Drink water.
- Call a friend.
- Take a brisk five-minute walk.
- Read your list of reasons for quitting tobacco.
- Ask yourself: *Do I really want to begin this process all over again?*
- If possible, take a hot shower or relaxing bath.
- Distract yourself with a project. Cultivate a new interest or hobby.
- Listen to a relaxation tape or calming music.
- If you were usually smoking while driving, keep mints, lollipops, straws or cinnamon sticks handy. Books on tape can help distract you from smoking. If possible, take public transportation, or ride with a non-smoking friend to work.
- Do some stretching.
- If you are at a party where you'll be tempted to use tobacco, spend time with the non-smokers, and if you find the situation too difficult, leave the party, even if it's just for a few minutes.
- If you miss the sensation of having a cigarette in your hand, play with something else like a pencil, a marble, or a stress ball.
- For the first couple of weeks, avoid situations you strongly associate with the pleasurable sensations of using tobacco, such as watching TV, sitting in your favorite chair or surfing the net.
- If you feel you must use tobacco, give yourself 30 minutes to think it over. During that time, try at least three of the above methods to overcome this urge. Also, think ahead about how you'll feel if you do use tobacco again. Is it worth it? Think how much better you'll feel later on if you don't give in to the craving.

