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# You've Tried to Quit – And it's not Easy.

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But giving up on quitting is not the answer. Instead, consider this an opportunity to step back and look at what didn't work for you: did you have enough support and guidance? Did you have a hard time managing cravings? Or, if you tried a smoking cessation medication, could the dosage be adjusted? With a few tweaks to your quit strategy, and with help from your healthcare professional, you can get back on track to a successful quit.

## Trying a different approach may help.

Here are a few strategies that you may want to consider in your next quit attempt. They have been shown to work for many people who are searching for more effective ways to kick the habit for good.

### Gradual Reduction

Instead of trying to stop smoking right away, why not try a gradual reduction in the number of cigarettes you smoke?

Here's how to do it:

- 1 Decide on the number of cigarettes you will stop taking. You can also decide to reduce your tobacco intake by taking fewer drags/inhalations per cigarette, waiting an hour longer each day before lighting up your first cigarette.

#### TIPS:

- Try to extend the time between each cigarette to a point where the need to smoke becomes too strong to tolerate
- Set a specific number of cigarettes per day and a fixed time (i.e. every hour) **without** the usual rewards, such as smoking with your coffee, newspaper, phone, friends or coworkers. By doing this, you'll break the association of smoking with the events, people or pleasurable activities with which you'd normally pair.

- 2 When you feel a craving coming on, use nicotine replacement therapy\* instead of a cigarette.

- 3 Choose a dosage that matches your level of dependence on nicotine. A healthcare professional can help.

- 4 Over time, as you become more confident reducing the number of cigarettes, you will find quitting completely easier.

- 5 Remember: support and medication can help your chances of a successful quit experience.

## Did you know? It may take multiple attempts before quitting smoking for good.

The most important aspect to smoking cessation is maintaining the motivation to make multiple attempts. The probability of success increases with each try.

- Quitting smoking is no easy task.
- Among Canadians who have successfully quit, studies have shown that it takes many people at least a few attempts before becoming 100% smoke-free.
- So while you may feel discouraged, remember: it's normal to face challenges along the way.

## Manage those Cravings

- Cravings are a natural part of quitting smoking.
- Your body becomes used to a steady supply of nicotine.
- When this supply is cut off, it is normal to have withdrawal symptoms and cravings.

## Find ways to overcome the cravings.

- Cravings are generally at their worst in the first few days or weeks after you quit.
  - If you can keep in mind that these feelings will pass (usually within 5-10 minutes), it may give you extra motivation to stay strong.
  - When a craving hits, try the "7 D's" to help you:

1 Distract

2 Delay

3 Deep breathe

4 Drink water

5 Don't buy cigarettes

6 Don't bum cigarettes

7 Discuss

- Have you tried medication? Using a medication can help you manage a craving. Nicotine patches, gums, inhalers and lozenges can give you just enough nicotine to calm down a craving. Prescription medications for smoking cessation have also been shown to be very effective.

## Quitting can be stressful – but smoking isn't the answer!

Many people believe that smoking is an effective way to deal with stress. However, a recent study showed that after quitting, many smokers felt **less stress and anxiety** compared to those who did not succeed in quitting.

\*When trying the reduce to quit strategy, use nicotine replacement therapy such as NICORETTE® Gum, Thrive® gum or lozenge