



Mount Tom Tobacco Control Coalition

Easthampton ♦ Granby ♦ Hatfield ♦ Holyoke ♦ Northampton ♦ South Hadley ♦ Southampton

November is the Great American Smoke-out

This is a great time to quit smoking. Here's how:

Line up your support

Support from family, friends, and co-workers makes it easier to quit smoking. These people are around you a lot, so getting them to help you will pay off!

You can also get support from someone who is trained to help people quit smoking. Using counseling support doubles your chances of quitting for good. Using counseling and medicine together more than doubles your chances of quitting for good!

- ❑ Think about which family, friends, and co-workers you want to tell about your plans to quit smoking—and then tell them. Who will give you support and be positive? Think about how they can help you: do you want them to call you? Go for walks with you? Send you email messages to keep your spirits up? If you would rather they didn't make a big deal about it, tell them that, too.
- ❑ Let your healthcare provider know you are quitting, and ask for their advice.
- ❑ Contact your insurance plan to learn what types of quit-smoking medicine and counseling they cover.
- ❑ If you are thinking about using counseling support, sign up now. Quit-smoking groups and one-on-one support options are available in Massachusetts.

Free one-on-one support is available over the phone through the Massachusetts Smokers' Helpline at 1-800-Try-to-Stop (1-800-879-8678)

Decide on medicine

You don't have to use medicine to quit smoking, but it makes quitting easier. Using medicine helps with your withdrawal symptoms and makes you twice as likely to quit for good. Using medicine and counseling support together makes you more than twice as likely to quit for good!

- ❑ If you have tried a medicine before, try again. A different one may work better for you. Get your medicine and know how to use it before your quit day

arrives!

- ❑ Check with your insurance company to see if it will pay the cost of medicine to help you stop smoking
- ❑ Make sure you use the medicine exactly as the instructions say. You can ask your pharmacist or doctor to tell you how to use it

Three types of medicines are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to help people quit smoking:

- ❑ **Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)** includes the patch, gum, lozenges, nasal spray, and inhalers. Most people try the patch first because it is the easiest to use.

NRT helps you with cravings by giving your body a small, steady amount of nicotine. After a few weeks, you reduce the amount of nicotine until you are nicotine-free. NRT is not addictive and does not contain the poisons found in tobacco smoke.

- ❑ **The patch, gum, and lozenges** are available without a prescription, but you should let your doctor know you are about to start! Your doctor must prescribe the inhaler and nasal spray.

If your insurance doesn't pay for NRT, look for coupons, sales, or store-brand versions, which often cost less.

- ❑ **Zyban is also known as Wellbutrin SR.** It is a pill that can help with cravings and other withdrawal symptoms. It is not addictive. You start taking it about one week before you quit smoking, getting your body ready for the changes to come. Your doctor must prescribe it.
- ❑ **Chantix** is the newest medicine available. It is a pill that helps with cravings and other withdrawal symptoms. It also blocks the part of the brain that gives smoking its kick. It is not addictive. You start taking this pill at least one week before quitting smoking. Your doctor must prescribe it.

If you don't feel well while using any quit-smoking medicine, call your doctor or talk with a pharmacist right away. As with all medicines, there may be side effects.

Get ready to quit

Cut down to get ready.

If you smoke more than 10 to 12 cigarettes each day, you may find it helpful to cut down on the number you smoke before you quit for good.

Use these steps to cut down before you quit:

- ❑ **Set a quit date that is 2 to 4 weeks away.**

- ❑ **Over the next 2 weeks, slowly cut down on the number of cigarettes you smoke each day.**
- ❑ **When you reach 10 to 12 cigarettes per day, you are ready to quit for good on your quit date.**

Remember, cutting down on cigarettes makes it easier to quit, but it is not a proven way to quit by itself. Use cutting down as a way to get ready to quit.

Make your world smoke-free.

Make some small changes before you quit. These will make it easier to stop smoking on your quit date:

- ❑ Remove cigarettes from your home, car, and purse or bags.
- ❑ In the week or two before you quit, avoid smoking in places where you spend a lot of time, like your home or car.
- ❑ Make plans to go to places you enjoy that don't allow smoking—restaurants, cafés, ballparks, movie theaters, etc.
- ❑ Stock up on healthy snacks.
- ❑ Write down the reasons you want to quit and put your list where you'll see it—by your computer, next to the TV, on the fridge, or taped to the bathroom mirror.

Use the [Free Massachusetts Smokers' Helpline](#)

1-800-Try-To-STOP (1-800-879-8678)

When you're quitting, talking privately with a trained professional who knows what you're going through can help a lot - and can even double your chances of quitting successfully! Using support and medication together makes you *three times as likely to quit for good!* The Helpline is open on Monday-Thursday from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm and on Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

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