

Tips to Help Your Loved One Quit Smoking

If someone in your life smokes and is thinking about quitting, your support and encouragement is critical in helping them along their tough journey. Here are some tips for helping your loved one kick the habit for good.

Be Their Cheerleader

If your loved one says they're thinking about quitting, that's a huge step. Respond positively, encourage them, and tell them you'll be there to help and listen whenever they need you. But remember there's a fine line between encouragement and pressure.

If You Smoke, Consider Quitting, Too

It's often easier with the help of a partner. But if you're not ready, you can still support your loved one as they work toward a smoke-free life by following these steps:

- Don't smoke around them. Being around other smokers can make it more difficult for those trying to quit.
- Don't buy cigarettes if you're together.
- Avoid smelling like cigarettes when you're together — change clothes, wash your hands, and use mouthwash.
- Keep ashtrays, lighters, and cigarettes out of view.

Provide a Bit of Distraction

Cravings only last a few minutes, although to the person trying to quit, they can feel much longer. Help your loved one think of ways to distract themselves whenever they feel the urge to smoke.

- Plan smoke-free activities, like going to the movies, taking a walk, going for a bike ride, or dining out at a new restaurant.
- Put together a "quit kit," with items that help diminish cravings. Chewing gum or hard candy, puzzles, a stress ball, and drinking water are all good ideas.
- Encourage them to pick up the phone rather than a cigarette. A few minutes of texting, chatting, or playing a game on the phone can help someone get through a craving.

Recognize That Slip-ups Happen

You often have to fail to succeed, and that's especially true when someone is trying to quit.

If your loved one experiences a setback:

- Don't nag, criticize, or lecture.
- Stay positive and don't give up on them.
- Help them identify why they smoke, what triggers their cravings, what made them decide to quit, and what you can do to help them.

Celebrate Accomplishments

Milestones big and small should be celebrated, whether it's being smoke-free for a day or a year. Offer compliments on how far your loved one has come, and how much healthier they look. Celebrate with small gifts, like cards, flowers, or a special meal.

Share Free Resources

Quitlines provide free coaching—over the phone—to help you or your loved one to quit smoking.

- When you call [1-800-QUIT-NOW](tel:1-800-QUIT-NOW), you can speak confidentially with a highly trained quit coach.
- Quitlines provide many of the services and similar support you get in a stop-smoking class or from your doctor and can be a valuable complement to your doctor's care.
- Quitlines are available throughout the United States.
- Coaching help is available in several languages.

The quitSTART app is a free smartphone app that helps you quit smoking with tailored tips, inspiration, and challenges.

- Get ready to quit with tips and information to prepare you for becoming smokefree
- Monitor your progress and earn badges for smokefree milestones and other achievements
- Get back on track if you slip and smoke
- Manage cravings and bad moods in healthy ways
- Distract yourself from cravings with games and challenges

SmokefreeTXT is a free text messaging program that gives 24/7 encouragement, advice, and tips for becoming smokefree.

- Sign up by texting **QUIT** to **47848**.
- After you confirm your enrollment, you will receive daily text messages to support you in quitting smoking from the short code **47848** (message and data rates may apply). The program lasts for 6-8 weeks.
- You can opt out at any time by texting **STOP**. Text **HELP** at any time for information on the program.