



## RESOURCES

### Tobacco Quitlines

A nationwide network of toll-free tobacco quitlines is in place, offering cost-free telephone counseling and other services to help smokers in their efforts to quit. Utilizing their services can boost your chances of quitting by 41 percent over trying to do it entirely on your own. To find the number for your state's quitline, go to <http://www.naquitline.org> or call 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669).

# quitting TOBACCO

## Bad habit. Worse odds.

### Cigarette Roulette

Load one chamber of a six-shot revolver. Spin the cylinder. Place the muzzle against your temple and pull the trigger. You have a 17 percent chance of being killed. That's Russian roulette.

Load every other chamber of a six-shot revolver (3 in all). Spin the cylinder. Place the muzzle against your temple and pull the trigger. You have a 50 percent chance of being killed. That's smoking.

Despite such appalling odds, approximately 24.3 million men and 22.2 million women in this country still smoke – and 440,000 of them die every year from the effects of their habit. That's one death every 72 seconds – one every 67 seconds if you include the estimated 35,000 who will be killed each year by the effects of secondhand smoke.

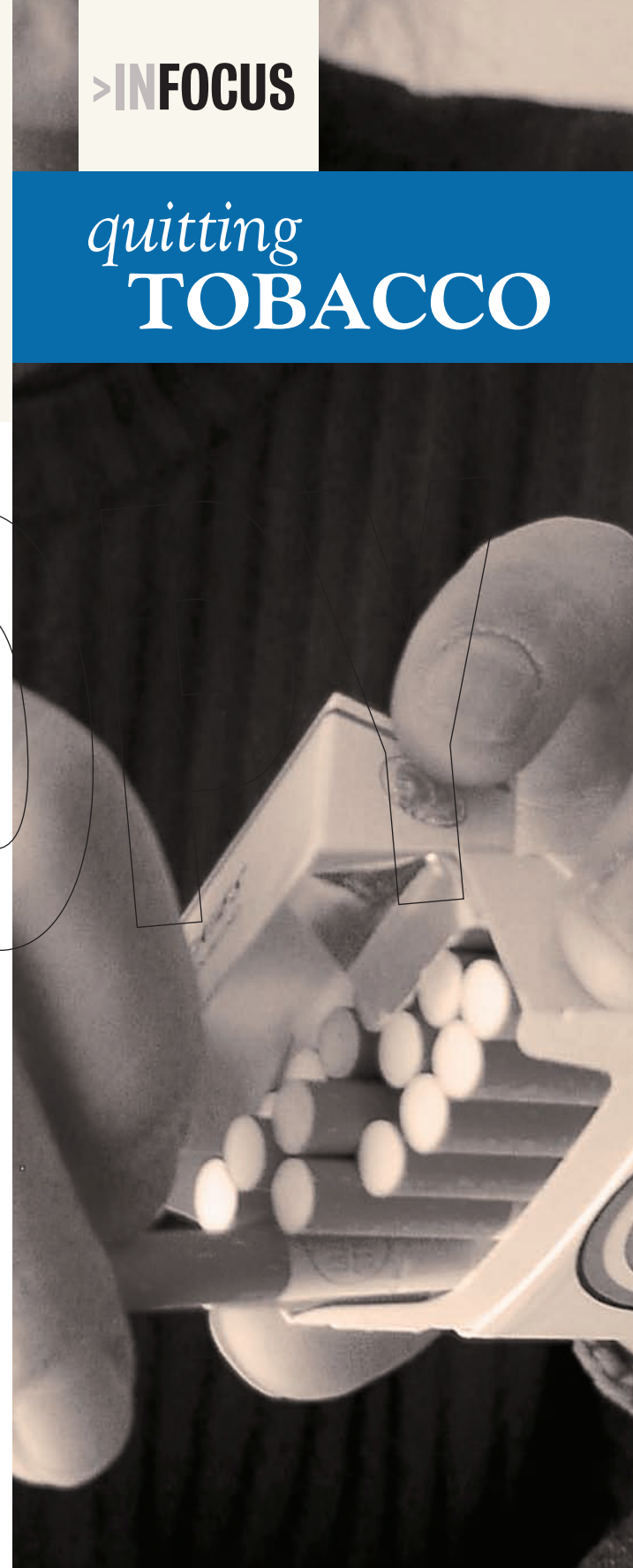
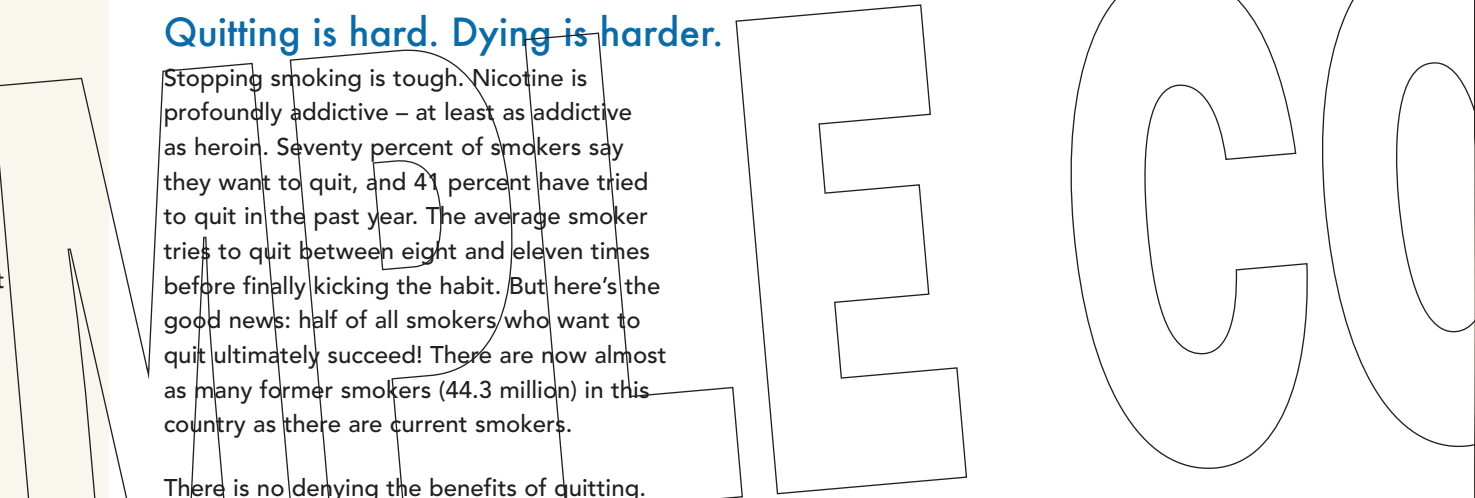
Worse still, another 3 million Americans, most of them under 18, will become addicted to nicotine this year – more than enough to replace the smokers who'll die from their habit. Half of these new smokers will eventually die of smoking's profound health effects, too – unless they quit.

### Quitting is hard. Dying is harder.

Stopping smoking is tough. Nicotine is profoundly addictive – at least as addictive as heroin. Seventy percent of smokers say they want to quit, and 41 percent have tried to quit in the past year. The average smoker tries to quit between eight and eleven times before finally kicking the habit. But here's the good news: half of all smokers who want to quit ultimately succeed! There are now almost as many former smokers (44.3 million) in this country as there are current smokers.

There is no denying the benefits of quitting. A lifelong smoker dies between thirteen and fourteen years prematurely because of the habit. The cost of smoking-related medical care and lost productivity amount to \$7.18 per pack of cigarettes.

There is no way to calculate the cost in human suffering attributable to smoking. Ask anyone who has watched a loved one die a slow, agonizing death from tobacco-related cancer.



## GET YOUR LIFE > INFOCUS

## Quitting's Benefits Just Keep Getting Better

The human body is remarkably resilient and self-restoring. Almost from the moment you stub out your last cigarette, you start feeling better and enjoying drastically improved health. Here's the timeline:

### 20 minutes:

- Blood pressure drops
- Pulse rate drops
- Hands and feet grow warmer

### 8 hours:

- Carbon monoxide level in the blood decreases
- Oxygen level in the blood increases

### 24 hours:

- Your heart attack risk begins to decline

### 48 hours:

- Nerve endings start to regenerate
- Your senses of taste and smell improve

### 2 weeks:

- Circulation improves
- Walking becomes easier
- Lung function improves up to 30 percent

### 1-9 months:

- Coughing, sinus congestion, shortness of breath and fatigue decrease
- The hair-like cilia in the lungs grow back, restoring their ability to clear the lungs of mucous and other impurities and reduce infection
- Body's overall energy level improves

### 1 year:

- The excess risk of heart disease you faced as a smoker is cut in half

### 5 years:

- 5 to 15 years after quitting, stroke risk is reduced to that of people who have never smoked

### 10 years:

- Lung cancer risk drops to as little as one-half that of continuing smokers
- Risk of mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas cancer declines
- Ulcer risk decreases

### 15 years:

- Risk of coronary artery disease is now similar to that of people who have never smoked
- Overall death risk returns to nearly the level of people who have never smoked



## Dealing with Stress

Most smokers smoke because they are stressed out. In order to stomp a smoking habit based on stress, you must learn to deal with your daily stresses.

To deal with the stresses in your life you must first identify them. The most widely recommended approach is maintaining a stress diary, in which you jot down notes on the events that cause you stress – not just the big ones, all of them. Stress is usually cumulative. It's easy to overlook or forget minor stressful events, but they add up. By carefully writing them down you may discover patterns and vulnerabilities you might otherwise overlook.

Examine all possibilities. Stresses typically fall into four general categories:

- 1. Lifestyle:** Changes in eating or sleeping habits, changes in living conditions, over-scheduling, major purchases.
- 2. Work:** Trouble with a superior, job promotion or demotion, changing jobs, getting fired or laid off.
- 3. Financial pressure:** Decreased income, mortgage foreclosure, collection notices, creditors phoning.
- 4. Relational stress:** Beginning or ending a romantic relationship, marriage, divorce, separation, pregnancy, a child leaving home, a death in the family.

## But There's No Free Lunch

The first few weeks after your last cigarette are no picnic. You'll probably experience the condition called "quitter's flu" as your body reacts to the detoxification. You'll also probably be rather irritable for a time. In addition to symptoms that mimic a cold or mild flu attack, you may experience:

- Insomnia
- Fatigue
- Inability to concentrate
- Headache
- Constipation, gas, stomach pain
- Dry mouth
- Chest tightness

While going through this initial phase of quitting, there are things you can do to resist the cravings.

- Resist in small increments. If you are fighting the desire for a cigarette, wait five minutes. Then wait another five, then another, until the craving subsides.
- Distract yourself. Phone a friend. Read a book. Call your state's tobacco quitline for support. (See back cover of brochure.)
- Drinking water can reduce a craving.
- Take a series of deep breaths.
- Exercise a bit more. Take a 15-minute walk. An even longer walk several hours before bedtime will help with insomnia.
- Get more rest. Extra sleep can help you weather those first tough days.
- Think of a way to reward yourself for every smoke-free day. But don't use food, which now tastes better, as a reward. Your metabolism will decrease slightly when you stop smoking, making it easier to gain weight.

The withdrawal symptoms will soon subside as your body adjusts to a nicotine-free state. After that, the persistent 'cravings' for cigarettes will be a product of the habit of smoking, which is easier to combat than the need for nicotine.

## Can medication help?

Yes. Nicotine replacement products – patches, gum, etc., have been shown to as much as double 6 to 12 month smoking quitting success rates. The anti-depressant drug bupropion, which mimics the brain chemistry effects of nicotine, also can double your chances of success.

Bupropion requires a doctor's prescription, and is not suitable for all patients. Both nicotine replacement therapy and bupropion can be used for extended periods.

## What About Just Switching to a Pipe, Cigars or Smokeless Tobacco?

Absolutely not! You're giving your brain the same immediate, addictive "hit" of nicotine that you get from cigarettes, and risking most or all of the same long-term health effects, plus some others unique to those forms of tobacco use. Besides, you're all but certain to drift back to cigarettes.

"It's my life. I can do what I want with it!" Every smoker, backed into a corner by arguments against the habit, has probably resorted to the "It's my life" defense. But, if you're addicted to something, it's controlling you. Want to really make it *your* life? Stop smoking!

