

Quitting Tobacco: Having a Drink ... Without Smoking

What To Expect

- As a smoker, you may feel a strong urge to smoke when drinking beer, wine, or mixed drinks. Know this up front if you are going to drink.

Did You Know?

- Studies show that cigarette smoking is much more common among those who are regular drinkers.

What To Do

- Switch to non-alcoholic drinks, especially fruit juices, during the first two weeks of withdrawal.
- Stay away from the places you usually drink alcohol for a while.
- If you do drink, don't choose the alcoholic beverages you usually have when smoking.
- For the first few weeks after quitting, drink only with non-smoking friends.
- Don't drink at home or by yourself.

Nicotine and Your Body and Mind

- Studies have shown that if you are a drinker, you will tend to breathe deeper when you drink and smoke—making the negative effects of tobacco even worse.
- When you are drinking alcohol, your control over your behavior is limited. When you try to quit smoking, it is tough enough to take control of your behavior—drinking alcohol will make it even tougher to cope.
- Many studies have reported that smoking, like drinking, may actually make you feel happier and more alert. Over time you begin to associate smoking and drinking with pleasure—when quitting, you may feel deprived of some of this pleasure.

Related Notes

- Once you pinpoint high-risk situations that trigger the urge to smoke, you can start to handle them rationally. When do you smoke and drink? Where? Nicotine cravings may be reduced by using nicotine replacement products, which deliver small, steady doses of nicotine into the body. Nicotine replacement patches, gum, lozenges, nasal spray, and inhaler appear to be equally effective. Bupropion pills (which don't contain nicotine) also help relieve withdrawal symptoms.



How To Get Help

- If you or someone you know wants help with giving up tobacco, please call the National Cancer Institute's Smoking Quitline toll-free at 1-877-44U-QUIT (1-877-448-7848). The information specialists on the Quitline can provide suggestions and support to help smokers break the habit.
- The Federal Government's Smokefree.gov Web site (<http://www.smokefree.gov>) allows you to choose the help that best fits your needs. You can get immediate assistance:
 - View an online step-by-step cessation guide.
 - Find state quitline telephone numbers.
 - Instant message an expert through NCI's *LiveHelp* service.
 - Download, print, or order publications about quitting smoking.

This fact sheet was adapted from material developed by the Tobacco Education and Prevention Program of the Arizona Department of Health Services and the Arizona Smokers' Helpline of the University of Arizona.

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