

Quit for your family.  
Quit for your health.  
Quit for your life.



Blue Care  
Network  
of Michigan

Confidence comes with every card.®



# Quit Guide

Blue Care Network's  
Tobacco Cessation Guide

**Your doctor has advised you  
to quit using tobacco.**

Open this guide for strategies to help you quit,  
medication recommendations and more.

**More than two-thirds  
of tobacco users want  
to quit completely.**

**We're here to help.**

Your primary care physician has advised you to quit using tobacco. We know you can succeed and we want to help.

In this guide, we provide you with information on quitting strategies and recommended medications to help you kick the habit for good. Talk with your doctor to determine the options that will work best for you.



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Blue Care Network's website is [bcbsm.com](http://bcbsm.com). While website addresses for other organizations are provided in this guide to use for more information, BCN doesn't control these sites and isn't responsible for their content.

## Making the decision to quit.

From the first moment you quit using tobacco, you're taking steps toward a healthier lifestyle. Early results can include:

- No more bad breath
- Easier to breathe
- Fewer colds and respiratory infections
- Stronger immune system
- Greater physical stamina
- Better-looking, smoother skin
- Brighter and whiter teeth

Quitting can also be good for you financially. According to **QuitDay.org**, the average tobacco user spends more than \$2,000 a year on tobacco products. If you quit, that's money back in your wallet.

## There are long-term benefits to quitting, too.

One of the most important benefits you'll get from quitting tobacco for good is peace of mind. Eventually, your body will feel as if you never used tobacco before.

When you quit once and for all, you're greatly reducing your risk of:

- Heart attack
- Emphysema
- Stroke
- Cataracts
- Infertility
- Ulcers
- Deadly cancers such as lung, throat, mouth, stomach, kidney and bladder
- Longer recovery times from illness and surgery

You can also add up to 14 years to your life. That's something you and your loved ones will surely appreciate.

# So you've made the smart decision to quit using tobacco.

These seven strategies will help you succeed.

- 1 Plan ahead; don't delay.** Write down all of the reasons you want to quit, as well as the reasons you don't want to quit. Make sure the pros outweigh the cons before you start. Take a minute to start your list now:

PROS

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CONS

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Once you decide to quit, pick a day and stick to it. Make sure you pick a day of the week or time that's easiest for you.

Keep that list for when you're having a rough day. It will remind you why quitting is worth it. Find a healthy alternative for every item you listed under the cons of quitting. For example, if smoking helps you relax, consider meditating or listening to music instead.

And most importantly, plan how you'll reward yourself. Decide ahead of time what you're going to do with all the money you'll save by not buying tobacco.

**2**

**Give medications a try.** Using tobacco cessation medications and counseling together may double your chances of success. See Page 7 for more information about tobacco cessation medications.

**3**

**Be prepared.** It's important to know what you might experience when you quit, and prepare a game plan to deal with it. You'll have good and bad days, but remember that it's worth it.

Successful quitters sometimes experience one or more of the following:

- Irritability
- Frustration
- Anger
- Difficulty concentrating
- Anxiety
- Restlessness

If you do experience withdrawal, find a healthy way to deal with it, such as taking a walk, chewing on sugar-free gum or calling a friend. Distractions can help you manage the cravings and resist the temptation to use.

**4**

**Avoid tempting situations.** Get rid of anything that reminds you of your tobacco use – whether it's an ashtray, lighter or a secret stash. Coffee and alcohol are typical triggers for using tobacco. Try to limit both until you have complete control over your cravings.

In addition, avoid places or situations where you previously used tobacco, and ask friends and family not to smoke around you.

**5**

**Give your mouth and hands something else to do.** Keep fruits and veggies on hand for when you might have a craving. Also, try healthier ways to relax, such as deep breathing techniques, taking a warm bath and meditation.

**6**

**Don't do it alone.** Using tobacco, particularly smoking, is often a social thing. Quitting can be, too. Tell your family, friends and coworkers that you're trying to quit. Their encouragement could make the difference. And if the going gets tough, you may need them to keep you motivated.

Find a counseling method that works best for you, such as over the phone, online or in person. Pages 11, 12 and 13 of this guide contain a list of counseling contacts for quitting tobacco.

**7**

**Take this time to focus on a complete, healthier you.** Try to develop other healthy habits during your attempt to quit. Getting plenty of sleep, planning healthy meals and participating in physical activities will help you fight those cravings.

## “What if I fail?”

### You're not alone.

Most successful quitters have tried many times before, so don't get discouraged if you need to quit more than once. If you find yourself using tobacco again, the best thing you can do for yourself is to quit – again.

Keep this guide with you at all times as a reference. There might be tips in here that you never thought of before when trying to quit.



There are a lot of myths about tobacco use and quitting.

## Know your sources.

If you can separate fact from fiction regarding quitting, you'll be ahead of the curve. **Avoid the following myths about quitting tobacco use:**

- “Water pipes, or hookah, are safer than cigars or cigarettes.” This is completely false as the water doesn't provide any filter from harmful chemicals in the tobacco. An average hookah session can expose a user to four times as much tar as an average cigarette.
- “Light cigarettes are less risky and not as harmful to you.” At least that's what the tobacco companies would like you to think. But again, it's completely untrue. The reality is that people who switch to “Light” or “Ultra Light” cigarettes typically end up smoking more often in order to get their tobacco fix.
- “I can get away with using tobacco because I exercise and eat well.” By no means can anyone “get away” with using tobacco. The risks are not diminished by other healthy habits.
- “It's too late for me. I've been using for way too long.” It's never too late. Your body starts to heal itself the minute you quit.
- “If I quit I'll gain weight, and that's even worse for my health.” It's true that the average person who is successful at quitting may gain a little weight, but the negative effects of tobacco are **far worse** than those related to a modest weight gain.



Nicotine addiction is a medical problem, and there are medicines that can help you quit.

## Fight the fight fully armed.

Why use medications to help you quit? Because the odds are stacked in your favor if you do. According to WebMD, medications can double and sometimes even triple the chances that a tobacco user will successfully quit.

### Where to begin

When considering a medication to help you quit, there are options you can do on your own or with the help of your doctor.

On your own:	Help of your doctor:
<b>Over-the-counter medications</b> Nicotine patches Nicotine gum Nicotine lozenges	<b>Prescription medications</b> Zyban Chantix Nicotrol inhaler or nasal spray

## Starting on your own: Nicotine replacement therapy

Nicotine replacement therapy is the use of over-the-counter medications to help curb tobacco use. These medications help lower cravings and the urge to use by delivering nicotine without the harmful chemicals and toxins found in tobacco products. Forms of this therapy include skin patches, chewing gum and lozenges.

If you don't want to pay out of pocket for these nicotine replacement products, find out from your health plan if you have prescription coverage and what it will cover.

## What to know about nicotine replacement therapy

If you decide to quit tobacco by using over-the-counter medications, here are some things you should know:

- You can double your chances of quitting if nicotine replacement medication is taken as directed.
- Becoming addicted to nicotine replacement therapy is rare.
- Heavy tobacco users may need higher doses.
- Over-the-counter nicotine replacement products are sometimes as effective as prescription medications.

## Start with the help of your doctor: Prescription medication

The following chart shows some of the most popular prescription medications your doctor can prescribe to you to help fight cravings.

Prescription drug	Important patient information
Zyban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medication can be combined with over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapy to combat cravings and withdrawal symptoms.</li> <li>• Patients are typically able to quit after using the drug for seven to 12 weeks; however, the medication can be used for up to six months after quitting.</li> </ul>
Chantix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medication works on the nicotine receptors in the brain so it lessens the pleasure of using tobacco and will decrease your desire to do so.</li> <li>• Recommended course of treatment is 12 weeks but can be extended for up to an additional 12 weeks to prevent a relapse.</li> </ul>
Nicotrol (inhaler or nasal spray)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medication is absorbed rapidly through the mucous membranes acting on nicotine receptors in the brain.</li> <li>• Inhaler: Medication starts at a high dose (six to 12 times a day) and then over the course of time decreases (after 12 weeks, one to two times a day).</li> <li>• Nasal spray: Medication can be used up to three months.</li> </ul>

## For some, two is better than one: combination therapy

Serious tobacco users who have difficulty quitting may need the help of both over-the-counter and prescription medications in order to completely quit the habit once and for all. This includes people who:

- Were not successful quitting while on one medication
- Have tried to quit multiple times
- Experienced cravings they can't overcome
- Experienced major nicotine withdrawal symptoms

If you match any of these characteristics, combination therapy may be your best bet. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist for a more detailed tobacco cessation plan.



There are plenty of resources available to help you live longer

Take advantage of them today



## By phone

- **Tobacco Cessation Coaching, powered by WebMD®**  
For no extra cost, Blue Care Network members can join this telephone-based coaching program. For more information and to get started, call 1-855-326-5102.
- **Michigan Tobacco Quit Line**  
Offers free telephone counseling with a personal health coach for up to five sessions. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).
- **American Cancer Society**  
Receive A Guide to Quitting Smoking by calling 1-800-ACS-2345 (1-800-227-2345).
- **National Cancer Institute**  
Call 1-877-44U-QUIT (1-877-448-7848) to speak with a counselor for help quitting and answers to smoking-related questions in English or Spanish.
- **Nicotine Anonymous**  
Call 1-877-879-6422 to participate in a telephone support meeting.



## Online

### General information

- [ahealthiermichigan.org/smoking-cessation](http://ahealthiermichigan.org/smoking-cessation)
- [ffsonline.org](http://ffsonline.org)
- [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov)

### Online meetings

- **Unofficial Nicanon:**  
[health.groups.yahoo.com/group/unofficialnicanon](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/unofficialnicanon)
- **Voices of Nicotine Recovery:**  
[voicesofnicotinerecovery.com](http://voicesofnicotinerecovery.com)



## Mobile phone apps

There are many phone apps you can download to help you quit. They're available for use on most smartphones and some are free.



## In-person, 12-step meetings

- Search for meetings near you at **[nicotine-anonymous.org](http://nicotine-anonymous.org)**.
- Meetings in Michigan are currently held at the following locations\*:
  - **Dearborn**  
Good Shepherd Church  
1570 Mason St.  
(Thursdays 7 p.m.)
  - **Lansing**  
Sparrow Hospital St. Lawrence  
Campus  
1210 W. Saginaw St.  
(Mondays 6 p.m.)

*\*Meeting schedule is up-to-date as of March 2017. Visit **[nicotine-anonymous.org](http://nicotine-anonymous.org)** to confirm that the locations and times haven't changed.*



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