

How to Start a Conversation with Your Doctor About Quitting

Your doctor is a great resource to help you quit tobacco for good. And sometimes it's hard to know how to start the conversation.

Here are some suggestions for how to bring up the conversation with your doctor or other health care provider, along with some questions to ask so you can make sure you have all of the information you need.

Start the conversation:

- *“I want to quit tobacco, but it has been hard.”*
- *“I’ve tried to quit before, but I’ve been unsuccessful.”*
- *“I need more help to quit tobacco.”*
- *“Can we talk about quitting tobacco?”*
- *“I’m thinking about quitting. Can I get some more information?”*
- *“I’ve heard I can get free medication from my insurance. Can you tell me more about using Chantix or Nicotine Replacement Therapy to quit?”*
- *“Can you write me a prescription for stop-smoking medication?”*

Questions to ask if you want to learn more about **why** you should quit:

- *“How could quitting smoking improve my health?”* Even if you know that there are benefits to your health, ask your doctor to tell you about all the ways that quitting tobacco can impact your short- and long-term health – it might surprise you.
- *“Besides my health, how will quitting help my family and friends?”* Asking about how quitting will help those around you can help provide helpful motivation.
- *“I’ve smoked for so long, will quitting now really make a difference?”* Your doctor can help explain the benefit of quitting at any point in time.

Questions to ask if you want to learn more about **how** to quit:

- *“Can you tell me more about....”* There are many methods to help you quit. Asking your doctor about details can help you select which one is right for you. Methods include:
 - Nicotine Replacement Therapy, like the patch or gum, which can also be used in combination
 - Medications, like Chantix or Wellbutrin
 - Group Counseling
 - 1×1 Counseling
 - Quit Services – including phone, text, or apps
- *“What support programs or methods would you recommend?”*
- *“Can I combine different methods and medications to help me quit?”* Your doctor can help create a custom quit program for you.

- *“Does quitting cold turkey work?”* While many people try to quit cold turkey, it’s not the most effective method. Your doctor can help explain why and things you can do to have the best results.
- *“How can I increase my chances of quitting for good?”* Quitting tobacco is hard but your doctor can help you identify ways that will help you to be more successful.
- *“What should I avoid when trying to quit?”* Your doctor can help identify smoking triggers and aspects of your life that contribute to making quitting more difficult.
- *“How can my family and friends help me?”* Quitting is easier with the help of a support network. Your doctor can help identify things that your friends and family can do to help support you, even if they smoke themselves.
- *“What should I do if I have a craving?”* Your doctor can help you identify ways to combat cravings and provide redirection if you have an urge to use tobacco when you’re trying to quit.

Questions about timeline:

- *“How long will it take for me to quit?”* Quitting is a process and your doctor can help you manage expectations for quitting.
- *“What withdrawal symptoms should I expect and when will they go away?”* Knowing what to expect can help prepare you to be successful.

Closing out the conversation:

- *“What are the next steps?”* Make sure you know what the next steps are once you leave the doctor’s office.
- *“Where can I get additional information?”* Your doctor can direct you to additional resources.
- *“Is there anything else you would recommend to help me quit?”* See if your doctor has any final recommendations to help you be successful.