



MANAGING ADDICTION AND GAINING SELF CONTROL





Having an addiction can be devastating

You can protect and restore your health from addiction by developing varied interests that add meaning to your life.

Overcoming addiction is not just about having willpower or desire – it's also about recognizing a problem and seeking help.

Starting the path to recovery and taking back control of your life is possibly one of the best things you can do for your health and wellbeing.

If you've decided to make a change, use the strategies and tips presented here to discover ways to fight addiction.

ALCOHOL USE

Drinking alcohol can be pleasurable for many. However, consuming too much alcohol can cause short-term health risks such as injuries, violence, alcohol poisoning and long-term health risks such as heart disease, damage to your liver, high blood pressure, weakened immune system, memory problems, mental health problems and an increased risk of some cancers.

Low-risk or moderate alcohol drinking

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025's advice to keep your risk of alcohol harm low is:

Men : Drink no more than two standard drinks a day.

Women: Drink no more than one drink per day.

Have at least two alcohol-free days per week.

One standard drink is 14g of pure alcohol and is equal to 12 fluid ounces of regular beer (5%), 5 fluid ounces of wine (12%), or 1.5 fluid ounces of 80 proof distilled spirits (40%).

Tips for lowering alcohol risks

- Learn what constitutes a 'standard drink'
- Always have a track of how much you drink – daily and weekly
- Set limitations for yourself and stick to them
- Alternate between non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks
- Drink slowly
- Go for drinks that have a lower alcohol content
- Eat before or while you are drinking
- Never drink and drive



ARE YOU READY TO MAKE THE CHANGE?

Whether or not you can cut back on your drinking successfully depends on the severity of your problem. If you're an alcoholic (meaning you're unable to control your drinking)—it's best to try to stop drinking altogether. But if you're not ready to take that step yet, or if you don't have an alcohol abuse problem and you've decided to cut down, the following "SMART" goals can help.

Your goal should be:

- **Specific:** Set a specific goal "I will stop drinking between 12 a.m. and 10 a.m."
- **Measurable:** Your success should be easily quantifiable. As for the goal mentioned above, keep a record of your drinking to help you reach your goal.
- **Achievable:** Your goal should be one you are physically able to do and one that is safe for you.

ARE YOU READY TO MAKE THE CHANGE?

If you have a chronic drinking problem, following the sample goal may require the supervision of a doctor since the interruption in drinking could bring on life-threatening withdrawal consequences.

- **Realistic:** Something you believe you can do.
- **Time-based:** Set a date and time, and examine your progress at regular intervals.





TOBACCO USE-QUIT SMOKING FOR GOOD

Smoking is the greatest single self-imposed health risk of all.

Smoking and tobacco use have been linked to an array of health problems, so the sooner you quit, the better. Quitting may take several attempts because it is more than just a matter of willpower. But don't get discouraged. You can definitely quit.

In fact, as of today, there are more ex-smokers than smokers in the U.S. You will also notice a significant impact on your budget – someone who smokes half a pack a day can save \$70 a week by giving up.

Are you ready to quit?

If you use tobacco you can lower your risk by stopping TODAY. You will notice the health benefits immediately. Try this 5 step action plan designed to help you beat the smoking addiction.

5 STEP ACTION PLAN

1. Monitor your current pattern of tobacco use –

When do you smoke or use tobacco, and why?

"I smoke first thing in the morning: its part of waking up"

"I smoke to stay calm when I get stressed"

"I use tobacco when I get angry"

"I smoke to be sociable; all my friends smoke"

2. Make up your mind to give up tobacco now – whatever your age, it will lower your risk.

Is it cool to be addicted? – NO.

Pick a day you're going to stop. Try to choose a day when you aren't under much stress. Make sure you get rid of any tobacco, ashtrays, matches, or lighters. AND STOP.

"I just did it; I stopped".

3. Keep track of 'special times' when you might want to smoke and stay determined to quit.

Choose alternative things to do when you are tempted to smoke.

"I chew gum instead: it helps me focus"

"I go for a brisk walk when I feel tempted"

5 STEP ACTION PLAN

4. Practice ways of saying "NO" to help you.

"I've just given up smoking: please don't tempt me"

"No thanks. I don't smoke anymore"

5. Ask your friends to support you.

In order to continue being a nonsmoker you need someone to cheer you on and remind you that you're doing great.

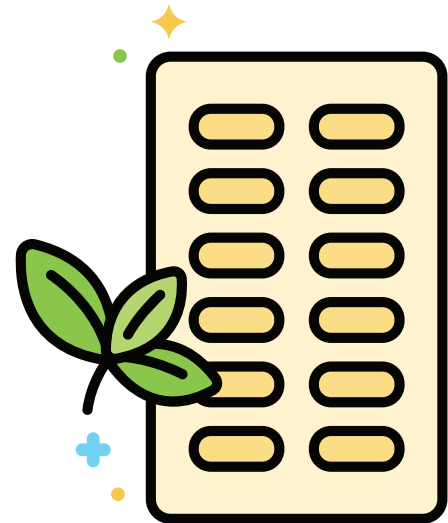


NICOTINE IS AN ADDICTIVE DRUG

When you quit smoking or tobacco use, you may experience withdrawal symptoms such as increased appetite. This will gradually reduce. You may experience other symptoms like disturbed sleep, feeling depressed or irritated or even light-headedness.

You will need extra help from friends and family during this time. Nicotine patches or nicotine chewing gum may help reduce withdrawal symptoms.

If you relapse, don't worry. Learn from your mistakes and try again. It may take you a few months before you start feeling confident that you will never want another cigarette.



What you will achieve if you quit Alcohol or tobacco use:

- You will be less at risk from major illnesses
- You will have more savings
- You'll feel healthier, and
- You will influence your family's healthy lifestyle

SUGAR ADDICTION

Do you have a sweet tooth? Most of us overindulge at times. But the thing about sugar is.. the more we consume it, the more we want it. A reason why it's so tough to kick the habit is that over time our brain actually gets addicted to the natural opioids that are triggered by consuming sugar. Much like the usual drugs of abuse, such as alcohol, cocaine, and nicotine, a diet loaded with sugar may cause excessive reward signals in the brain, which can override one's self-control and lead to addiction.

Like other drugs, sugar can damage your health and lead to many ailments, including diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, weight gain, and premature aging. To put it simply, sugar is a socially acceptable, legal, recreational drug with deadly consequences—and as with any drug addiction, you need to have a flexible but structured plan to beat it.



HOW TO FIX A SUGAR ADDICTION

Eat three meals and two snacks a day. Not eating on time may cause blood sugar levels to drop, make you feel hungry, and make you more likely to crave sweet sugary snacks.

- Select whole foods. The closer food is to its original state, the less processed sugar it will contain.
- Have a breakfast of protein, fat, and phytonutrients to start your day off right.
- A typical breakfast full of carbs and sugary or starchy foods is the worst option since you'll have cravings all day.
- Try to incorporate a healthy source of protein and/or fat with each meal. This helps control blood sugar levels.
- Add spices such as cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and cardamom to sweeten your foods and reduce cravings naturally.
- Take multivitamin and mineral supplements like Vitamin D3, vitamin b3, magnesium, chromium, and omega 3 fatty acids. The fewer nutrient deficiencies, the fewer cravings.

HOW TO FIX A SUGAR ADDICTION

- Get enough sleep. When we are tired, we often use sugar for energy to counteract the exhaustion.
- Exercise, dance or do some yoga. This will boost your energy and lower your need for a sugar lift.
- Be open to exploring the emotional issues surrounding your sugar addiction.
- Keep sugary snacks out of your house and office. You can't snack on things that aren't there, can you
- Do a detox to help reset your appetite and decrease sugar cravings.
- Don't substitute artificial sweeteners for sugar.
- Learn to read labels to educate yourself about what you're putting into your body.
- Become familiar with sugar terminology. Recognize sweeteners: Corn syrup, corn sugar, high fructose corn syrup, sucrose, dextrose, honey, molasses, turbinado sugar, and brown sugar.

HOW TO DEAL WITH A SUGAR CRAVING

- Sugar in disguise. Most of the "complex" carbohydrates we consume like bread, bagels, and pasta are usually highly refined and act like sugars in the body.
- Take L-Glutamine, 1000-2000mg, every couple of hours as necessary. It often reduces sugar cravings as the brain uses it for fuel.
- Take a "breathing break." Find a quiet spot, sit for a few minutes and focus on your breath. After sometime the craving should pass.
- Distract yourself. If possible, go for a walk. Cravings usually last for 10-20 minutes maximum. If you can distract yourself with something else, it often passes.
- Drink lots of water. Sometimes drinking water can help with sugar cravings. Also, sometimes what we perceive as a food craving is actually thirst.

- Have a piece of fruit instead. If you give in to your cravings,
- eating a piece of fruit can satisfy a sweet craving and is much healthier.

ARE YOU READY TO QUIT?

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A central graphic features a red prohibition sign (a circle with a diagonal slash) overlaid on a white sign that reads "HOW TO QUIT SMOKING". The sign is surrounded by a pack of cigarettes, several loose cigarettes, and a lit cigarette. Five orange lines extend from the right side of the sign to the corresponding text items in the list.

- Monitor your current pattern of tobacco use
- Make up your mind to give up tobacco now
- Ask your friends to support you.
- Practice ways of saying "NO" to help you
- Keep track of 'special times' when you might want to smoke and stay determined to quit