

Providing support as your loved one decides to quit tobacco

For some people, quitting tobacco can be the toughest challenge they ever experience. For family members, talking to a loved one about making this decision and staying supportive as he or she works to quit tobacco, can be difficult as well.

How can you talk to your loved one about quitting tobacco? What things do you need to understand as your loved one attempts to quit tobacco? How can you help them quit?

- 1.** Allow your loved one the time they need to make the decision to quit. They will be more willing to stick with the decision to quit if it is made on their own.
 - 2.** Understand that the decision to quit tobacco is much easier than actually doing it. It takes the average tobacco user seven (7) attempts before they quit using tobacco for good.
 - 3.** Ask your loved one to list the best ways you can support them. Talk about things that are not helpful or may create more stress. For example, “Is it helpful when I ask how your quit attempt is going?” or “I’m here for you. Do you want some advice or input, or do you just want me to listen for now?”
 - 4.** Don’t shame or blame - be supportive and understand that quitting takes a lot of hard work and effort.
 - 5.** Be there for your loved one during the tough times – your loved one may be irritable for several weeks after quitting tobacco and will need your support during these times most of all.
 - 6.** At home, throw out ash trays and spit cans or both, clean the house and car – if others in the home use tobacco, urge them to go outside.
 - 7.** Encourage your loved one to be active – go for a walk or learn a new hobby together.
 - 8.** Be prepared for slips; they are very common when quitting tobacco. Slips are not the same as starting to use tobacco again. Your loved one can have a slip and still get back on track with him or hers quit attempt.
 - 9.** Remind your loved one to drink a lot of water or caffeine-free herbal tea – drinking fluids will help flush the nicotine out of their body. Stock up on healthy snacks and sugarless gum or candy to eat when cravings occur.
 - 10.** Have fun creating new ways to avoid using tobacco - keep a positive outlook. Talk about things that you and your loved one are looking forward to in your new tobacco-free lifestyle.
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