

Quitting Smoking

WHILE WORKING FROM HOME

Within the first week of quitting, excess carbon monoxide is out of your blood, most nicotine is out of your body and your sense of taste and smell improves. Over a longer period, your lung function and blood flow will improve and your risk of serious health conditions like stroke, lung cancer and heart disease will drop significantly.

Smoking harms almost every organ in your body. It is a leading cause of death and illness. In 2017-18, smoking resulted in around 6,850 deaths and 60,250 hospitalisations in NSW. Smoking is a major risk factor for many diseases and health conditions including heart disease, stroke, peripheral vascular disease, and many cancers. In fact, one in every two smokers will die early as a result of smoking related conditions.¹ When you quit smoking, you reduce the risk of these life threatening conditions.

Quitting is hard. Different methods may work for some but not others. Now is a great time to plan your quit journey. Free services including the Quitline are available to help. For more information on quitting and the services available head to page 3 of this factsheet.

For some people the 'cutting down to quit' method may be the best option. It involves reducing the amount you smoke as you move towards a quit date. It's a bit like taking the slow lane – you'll still reach your destination, but the journey might seem a little easier.

Cutting down to quit may feel right for you if you know you want to quit smoking, but you're not ready to stop completely right now. By cutting down, you're at least doing something as you move towards a quit date.

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health.

¹ Benefits of Quitting Smoking – Centre for Population Health. Accessed 17 February 2020. <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/tobacco/Pages/benefits-of-quitting.aspx>


Over a one-year period, approximately 75% of smokers will try to change their smoking behaviour by making a quit attempt or reducing the amount they smoke.

For many smokers, work provides structure to their day, including when and where they smoke. It is possible that your smoking behaviours are different when you work from home. You may have noticed that you are smoking more or you are finding it harder to make a quit attempt or sustain a quit attempt.

Many smokers make multiple quit attempts before they finally quit. It is ok if your quit attempt isn't successful. Every quit attempt is worthwhile. Remember that each quit attempt is part of your quit journey.

Tips to help quit smoking or cut down while working from home:

- Keep track of the amount of smoking breaks you have. You shouldn't increase the amount you smoke because you have greater flexibility and independence when you work from home.
- Work stress can be a trigger for some smokers and ex-smokers, and working from home can create a new range of stresses that come with working in a new environment. Have a plan of how to address work related stress that does not involve smoking.
- Remember that second-hand smoke impacts the health of everyone in your household. Second-hand smoke increases the risk of certain diseases and disorders. For children this includes ear infections, asthma and allergies. Think about those around you before you smoke at home.



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For smokers that want to quit, remember that working from home provides opportunities and advantages for your quit attempt:

- Your access to purchasing cigarettes and other smoking products is reduced. Take advantage of this reduced availability and consider making a quit attempt.
- Some smokers find it challenging to quit due to the social aspect of smoking. Take advantage of not being asked to join in on a smoke-break whilst at work.
- You have a lot more control over your work from home environment. Take advantage of this and remove triggers from your home.
- Many people find smoking more tempting when they drink alcohol. Take advantage of working from home by avoiding the temptation associated with after-work drinks.
- Remember that using Nicotine Replace Therapy (NRT) can help you to reduce the amount you smoke, or quit smoking. NRT is available from most pharmacies. Your GP can also help you to develop a quit plan tailored to your needs.
- Quit services throughout NSW are all available online, over the phone and through smart phone apps.
 - Call the Quitline on 13 7848 (13 QUIT). The Quitline is a confidential telephone service with smoking cessation specialists who can help you plan how to quit smoking.
 - Visit iCanQuit.com.au
 - Visit quitcoach.org.au
 - Download the My QuitBuddy App from the app store.
- For support to develop a quit smoking workplace health program register your workplace at www.gethealthyatwork.com.au/register

