

# Did you know....

Persons in recovery have much higher rates of smoking related illness?

Below are 10 WAYS we can help members resist tobacco cravings, provided by Mayo Clinic Staff

## Consider Medications:

### Options include:

- ◇ Prescription nicotine in a nasal spray or inhaler
- ◇ Over-the-counter nicotine patches, gum and lozenges
- ◇ Prescription non-nicotine stop-smoking medications such as bupropion (Zyban) and varenicline (Chantix)
- ◇ Short-acting nicotine replacement therapies such as nicotine **gum, lozenges, nasal sprays or inhalers** can help **overcome intense cravings**. These short-acting therapies are generally safe to use in combination with long-acting nicotine patches or one of the non-nicotine medications.

## Find Out and Avoid Triggers:

Urges for tobacco are likely to be strongest in the situations where you smoked or chewed tobacco most often, such as at parties or bars, or while feeling stressed or sipping coffee.

**Identify your trigger situations and have a plan** in place to avoid them entirely or get through them without using tobacco.

## Delay:

If a craving is coming on, try waiting 10 minutes! Then try to find a distraction for that period of time. Go to a public, smoke-free zone. These simple tricks may be enough to derail your tobacco craving.

## Chew on it:

Have something to do to fight a tobacco craving. Chew on sugarless gum or hard candy, or munch on raw carrots, celery, nuts or sunflower seeds — something crunchy and satisfying.

## Don't have 'just one':

It's tempting to have just one cigarette to satisfy a tobacco craving. But don't believe that it stops there. More often than not, having just one leads to another. Many people struggle with this type of limitation.

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## Get physical:

Physical activity can help distract from tobacco cravings and reduce their intensity. Even short burst of physical activity such as running up and down the stairs a few times can make a tobacco craving go away. **Get out for a walk or jog!**

**Stuck at home or in the office?** Try squats, deep knee bends, pushups, running in place, or walking up and down a set of stairs!

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## Practice relaxation techniques:

Smoking may have been your way to deal with stress. Resisting a tobacco craving can itself be stressful. Take the edge off stress by practicing relaxation techniques, such as deep-breathing exercises, muscle relaxation, yoga, visualization, massage or listening to calming music.

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## Call for reinforcements:

Touch base with a family member, friend or support group member for help in the effort to resist a tobacco craving. Chat on the phone, go for a walk together, and share a few laughs! A free telephone quit line — **800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669)** — provides support and counseling.

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## Go online for support:

Join an online stop-smoking program. Or read a quitter's blog and post encouraging thoughts for someone else who might be struggling with tobacco cravings. Learn from how others have handled their tobacco cravings.

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## Remind yourself of the benefits:

Write down or say out loud the reasons for quitting smoking and resist tobacco cravings. These might include:

- ◇ **Feeling better**
- ◇ **Getting healthier**
- ◇ **Sparing your loved ones from secondhand smoke**
- ◇ **Saving money**

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