

# Tackling Tobacco

## Quitting smoking and weight gain

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health. However, many people report putting off quitting due to fears of gaining weight.

### Will I gain weight if I quit?

- Some people may gain weight after quitting smoking, however it is often temporary.
- By quitting smoking you lower your risk of cancer, heart disease and other smoking-related health conditions.

### Why can weight gain happen?

The nicotine in cigarettes causes your body to use up energy faster. When you quit smoking, this process slows down and this can cause some weight gain.

Your sense of taste and smell, as well as your appetite start to improve. This is a welcome result of quitting, but may cause you to eat more. Choosing foods that will nourish your body will help you on your health journey regardless of your body weight.

### Tips to manage weight gain

- Use nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) to assist in managing nicotine withdrawal symptoms.
- Be aware of times when you crave a cigarette or food and keep some healthy snacks with you, like unsalted nuts or a piece of fruit.
- Choose foods from the 5 food groups, vegetables, fruit, wholegrains, lean meat, fish, eggs and beans and low-fat dairy foods. See the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.
- Swap alcohol and sugary drinks for water and sugar-free drinks. Read our blog for sugary drink swaps.
- Move more and sit less. Building activity into your day, such as a regular walk or using stairs instead of the lift, will help with your physical and mental health.

### Benefits of quitting

As soon as you quit smoking, your health improves. It continues to improve for many years after, even if you do gain weight. Some of the benefits of quitting smoking on your health include:



Less chance of getting heart disease and cancer



Increased life expectancy



Your sense of taste and smell come back



Fitness levels improve



Healthier skin and hair

### Thinking about quitting?

Your doctor can support you to quit smoking and help to choose the best support options for you.

- **Call the Quitline (13 QUIT - 13 7848):** Quitline is a free and confidential telephone service providing customised assistance to help with your quit attempt. There are also Aboriginal counsellors available, and counsellors who speak Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese.
- **iCanQuit website:** Explore the iCanQuit website to explore relevant resources, stories and to join a free, supportive online quit community.
- **My Quit Buddy App:** Download the app for quit tips, facts and to track your progress.
- **For more information, contact us:** [tacklingtobacco@nswcc.org.au](mailto:tacklingtobacco@nswcc.org.au)



Aboriginal Respect Symbol. Designed by Marcus Lee Design for Cancer Council NSW.



Cancer Council  
Tackling Tobacco