



STOP SMOKING
FOR GOOD



BENEFITS OF QUITTING SMOKING

BOOKLET 9

This is Booklet 9 in the *Stop Smoking For Good* series. It reminds you of the benefits that come from quitting smoking. If you still smoke cigarettes, you can get ready to quit again. It is not too late. If you have quit smoking, this booklet reminds you of how much you have done for yourself.

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Why This Booklet Now?

By the time you get this booklet, there is a good chance that you are no longer smoking cigarettes. You no longer need to be convinced to quit smoking. So why are we sending you a booklet about the benefits of quitting? Because we want you to think about what you have achieved. As time goes on, we often forget about how our lives have changed. This is true for quitting smoking. Do you still remember what it was like being a smoker? Do you remember why you wanted to quit smoking? Have you thought about how quitting has improved your life (or the life of your family)?



What if you haven't quit smoking yet? Or maybe you did quit but started again. We agree that quitting is hard. Many smokers need to try many times before they quit for good. Let's remember the benefits of quitting.

So, whether or not you are still smoking, take a moment now to think about the many benefits that come with quitting smoking. Before we remind you of some of them, write down as many as you can think of. Can you come up with at least four?

Benefits of Quitting Smoking

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

OK, now let's go over some of the benefits of quitting that we came up with...

Health Benefits

The #1 reason that people quit smoking is because of health concerns. That makes sense. Smoking is one of the deadliest things that a person can do to himself or herself. Each year smoking kills nearly half a million Americans and 5 million people worldwide. About half of all smokers will die from a disease caused by smoking. Those are terrible odds.



When people think of diseases caused by smoking, they often think of lung cancer. That's because most lung cancer patients smoked. But smoking can also cause at least 18 other types of cancer. Head and neck, stomach, liver, pancreas, bladder, colorectal, bone marrow, and kidney cancer are some of them.

Cancer isn't the only disease. Smoking is a leading cause of heart disease and stroke. It raises blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Smoking also causes lung diseases such as emphysema, bronchitis, asthma, and pneumonia. These diseases often make it hard to breathe and impact people's everyday lives.

We've now mentioned some harms of smoking. What then are the benefits of quitting? The long-term benefits are that you may not develop one of those smoking-related diseases. One year without smoking means you have cut your chance of having a heart attack in half. And 10 years without smoking means your chances of having a stroke or heart attack are now about the same as someone who never smoked. Your chance of getting any type of cancer is much less if you quit smoking than if you keep smoking.

Some health benefits begin sooner. After you quit, high blood pressure usually improves. Ex-smokers often find that they have more energy. They do not tire as quickly. When you quit smoking, did you notice that you could walk up hills or climb stairs better without becoming short of breath? Maybe you noticed that your "smoker's cough" is gone.



Your blood flow improves soon after quitting smoking. Maybe this is why your skin looks nicer. And why your hands and feet might not get cold as easily. Better blood flow also can mean better performance and pleasure during sex for both men and women. And if you are trying to have a baby, that becomes easier as well after quitting.

Former smokers also get back their sense of smell and taste. This means that food tastes much better.

These are just a few of the ways that quitting smoking improves your health. As mentioned in Booklet 5, the Surgeon General's report titled "The Health Benefits of Smoking Cessation" had **928** pages of reasons for quitting!

All of these health benefits contribute to increased peace of mind. One former smoker put it this way:



Back when I was smoking, I always thought about how much I needed to quit. I knew that smoking was bad for me, and it worried me. If I felt my heart pounding after moving some boxes at work, I worried that I might have a heart attack. If I coughed up some funny stuff, I worried that this was the first sign of lung cancer. I always figured that I wouldn't live past my 60s. As I grew closer to that age, that concerned me more and more. When I finally quit smoking, it was as if a huge weight was lifted off my back. Sure, I still worry sometimes about whether I waited too long before quitting. But mostly it feels just great that I don't have to fear all those diseases like I used to—and I don't have to feel guilty any more for smoking despite those fears. I really feel like a new man!

We often focus on how smoking can cause an early death. But smoking also lowers the quality of life in one's later years. Being a healthy 75-year-old is much better than being an unhealthy one. Heart disease, emphysema, bronchitis, or any form of cancer—all are very hard on smokers and their families.

Money Benefits

Have you found that your wallet is a little heavier since you quit smoking? Maybe your bank account is larger. Even if you haven't been saving up, perhaps you have spent a little more on things you really wanted compared to when your money went to cigarettes.

What exactly is the cost of smoking? Let's do a little math here. Let's say that each pack of cigarettes costs \$7.00. (It may be higher or lower than that, depending on where you live.) And let's say that you smoke about a pack per day. That works out to \$2,555 spent on cigarettes every year. What could you do with an extra \$2,555? Here are a few ideas:

- Buy a big screen TV and surround system.
- Take a very nice family vacation.
- Make a down payment on a car.
- Pay car insurance for a year or more.
- Pay for four years of school textbooks.
- Rent an apartment for several months in most cities.
- Pay for childcare for two or more months.
- Buy over 1,000 songs for your iPod.
- Put it in a savings account.
- Buy a new computer.



Almost everyone can find a use for an extra \$2,555! But let's say that you decide to put it in a simple savings account that earns 3% interest per year. After 10 years, you would have nearly \$32,000. And, if you could save the same amount for 30 years, you would end up with over \$125,000 in your account. Can you think of how you might want to spend \$32,000 in ten years, or \$125,000 in 30 years? Of course, if the price of cigarettes keeps going up – and it surely will – your savings would be even greater.

So, what would you like to do with an extra \$2,555 per year? In the box below, write down your plan for using your nonsmoking savings:

My Plan for Using the Money I Save by Not Smoking



Benefits of Quitting Smoking

There are also other ways that quitting smoking can save you money.

- Lower health-care costs. Even if you have health insurance, you could spend less in co-payments than if you kept smoking.
- Lower insurance costs. Health insurance can be twice as high for a smoker than for a nonsmoker or ex-smoker. Life insurance, homeowners insurance, and even car insurance rates can go down after one quits smoking.
- Increased job opportunities. Some employers will now only hire nonsmokers. Nonsmokers tend to be more productive at work because they do not need smoking breaks and use fewer sick days. If you are self-employed, this may mean more income for you. If you are an employee, you may be more likely to get raises and promotions.
- Fewer sick days. Some companies may give their employees payment for not using sick days.
- Value of your property. You may get more for your used car if it hasn't been smoked in. Also, home repair costs (such as cleaning, and replacement of carpets, drapes, and furniture) tend to be less for nonsmokers.

Quitting smoking can save you money in many different ways. It's up to you how to use that extra cash.

Social Benefits

Years ago, smoking was much more common. Most men smoked back in the 1950s. Smoking was often shown on TV and in the movies. Smoking seemed cool.

But times have changed. Smoking is no longer cool at all. Many of those smoking TV and movie stars died from cancer: Humphrey Bogart, Yul Brenner, John Wayne, Bette Grable, Gary Cooper, Patrick Swayze, Nat King Cole, Walt Disney, Jackie Gleason, Steve McQueen, Audrey Meadows, Robert Mitchum, Ed Sullivan, Lana Turner... Sadly, the list goes on and on.

With fewer people smoking, those who keep smoking have become more socially isolated. In fact, studies show that smokers tend to have fewer friends than nonsmokers. In most states, smokers are not allowed to smoke indoors, at work, or in public places. More outdoor spaces are also becoming off limits to smoking. It is clear that smokers are being left out. Even if you do not think this is fair, it is going on.

When you first quit smoking, you had to change some of your social activities. Maybe you don't hang out with the same coworkers during smoking breaks anymore. And maybe you have grown apart from friends who keep smoking. But as an ex-smoker, new social options have opened up. You no longer have to worry about bothering people with your smoke, or whether there will even be a place to smoke. You are no longer an outsider in a world of nonsmokers. And you no longer have to be concerned about harming others with your second-hand smoke.



The dangers of "second-hand smoke" have become better known over the past decades, and more so in recent years. Second-hand smoke kills over 40,000 Americans each year (USDHHS, 2014). Nonsmokers exposed to other people's smoke are at risk for heart disease, lung cancer, and even sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Infants and children appear to be at highest risk for getting sick from breathing in tobacco smoke. More knowledge about the health risks of second-hand smoke has placed more stigma on smokers.

Smokers often feel guilty about their smoking.

Mary felt blessed when her oldest daughter had a beautiful grandson, Ryan. She went out of her way to avoid smoking near Ryan. The last thing she wanted was to risk exposing the new baby to any harm caused by her cigarette smoke. But she kept smoking in her own home, and this started to cause problems. Even though Mary smoked out on the patio when Ryan was in her home, her daughter began to worry about the smell of smoke in the house. She did not want Ryan to spend too much time at Mary's house, and she would not even let Mary baby-sit in her own house. Mary felt awful about this, but she understood her daughter's concern. In fact, this was the final straw that pushed Mary to give up her cigarettes. Now she feels like a real grandmother again!



It is clear that many of the benefits of quitting smoking are social ones.



Brian smoked a little over a pack of cigarettes each day, but it was getting harder to do so. He no longer could smoke in his own office. Now he had to stand outside the front door. This was no fun when it was cold or raining. And he had to

deal with the dirty looks of people as they walked past him while going in and out of work. At one point, his company decided that having smokers at the front door of the building was not a good image for the business. So they moved the smoking section out back, next to the garbage cans. That was cold, wet, smelly... and humiliating. Brian felt that this was very unfair to smokers, but at least it did help him decide to quit smoking. When he at last quit, he no longer had to go to the garbage area out back, and he felt better about himself.

Psychological Benefits

One of the best benefits that come from quitting smoking is a very real sense of achievement. You deserve to feel proud and good about quitting. Quitting isn't easy. So, if you can quit smoking, you know that you can also take on other goals in your life.

Besides a well-earned sense of pride, quitting smoking rids you of the burden of knowing that you should quit. Nearly all smokers say that they want to quit, which means that they are living with a goal that they haven't yet achieved. Quitting smoking means checking off that item on your "To Do" list. And that feels good!

The health, money, and social benefits of quitting smoking lead to a noticeable psychological benefit. Feeling healthy can make a person feel happy. Quitting means having fewer worries about money because of money saved by not buying cigarettes.

Lifting the burdens of guilt and the feeling of being an outsider can feel good too. Many smokers feel a great sense of freedom when they quit smoking.

Quitting smoking also has direct psychological effects. Ex-smokers have better moods than current smokers. That means they are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety.

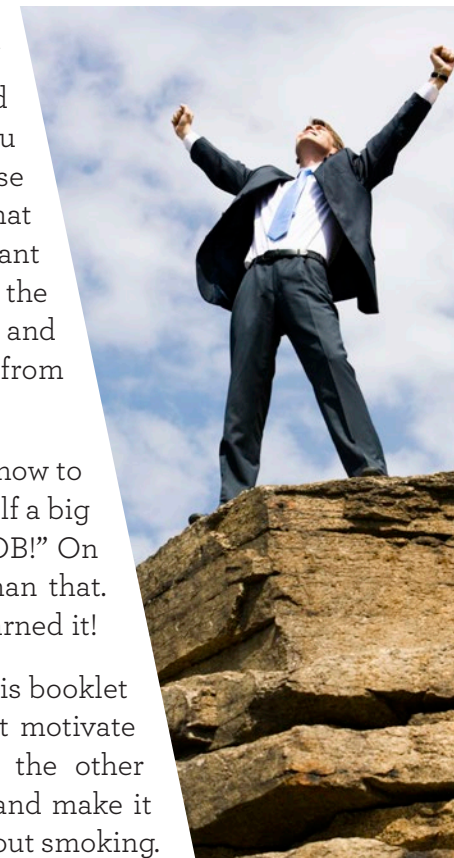


IT'S ALL GOOD

How did our list of the benefits of quitting compare to your list? Did you think of some benefits that we didn't mention? Did we remind you of some benefits that you had forgotten about? Looking over these lists, it is easy to see why experts say that quitting smoking is usually the most important life change that a person can make. Once the short-term nicotine withdrawal symptoms and cravings end, many good things come from quitting smoking.

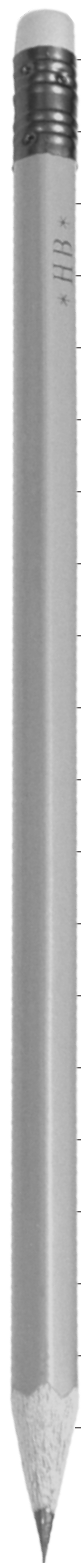
So if you have quit smoking, take a moment now to think about what you have done. Give yourself a big pat on the back and tell yourself "GOOD JOB!" On second thought, you really deserve more than that. You deserve a *standing ovation!* You have earned it!

If you are still smoking, then we hope that this booklet reminds you of why you want to quit. Let it motivate you to give it another try. Look back at the other booklets you got. These can help you quit and make it through the first few weeks and months without smoking.



You can do it!

Notes



The Most Important Messages

You should be proud for deciding to quit smoking and taking a step toward a better and longer life. Once again, congratulations!

We ask that you save this copy of *Stop Smoking For Good* and re-read it many times during the first year or two after quitting. People often forget the important points. To help you remember, here are some important of *Stop Smoking For Good* messages.

1

There are many health benefits to quitting smoking. It's always motivating to review the benefits you have experienced and those to come!

2

There are financial benefits to quitting smoking: saving the cost of cigarettes, lower insurance costs, and fewer sick days to name a few.

3

The social benefits to quitting are many: less stigma, less isolation, and more places you are welcome.

4

Psychological benefits to quitting bring feelings of pride and accomplishment and less guilt and worry.

5

Be proud of your accomplishment!

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