

MANAGING YOUR WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS



Chest Tightness

Why you're feeling it:

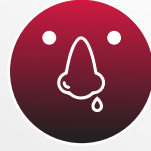
You may have sore muscles from coughing, or tense muscles from nicotine cravings.

How long it lasts:

A few weeks

What you can do:

Take some deep, slow breaths



Cold Symptoms

Why you're feeling it:

You might notice a lot of coughing/phlegm. This is a good sign. Your lungs are trying to clear out the tar and other dirt trapped inside your airways.

How long it lasts:

A few days

What you can do:

Drink lots of water to thin out the mucus and make it easier to bring up



Cravings

Why you're feeling it:

Your brain is begging for another hit of nicotine

How long it lasts:

For most people, cravings are strongest in the first few days after quitting. Some people have cravings occasionally for months or years

What you can do:

Wait it out. Your strong craving will last just a few minutes. Try another activity - take a walk, call a friend or use a nicotine replacement.



Dizziness

Why you're feeling it:

Your body is getting more oxygen now that you have quit smoking. This is a good thing! But your body needs time to adjust.

How long it lasts:

A few weeks

What you can do:

When you get up from sitting or lying down, get up slowly



Gas

Why you're feeling it:

While you're in withdrawal, your bowels may move less often than before. This constipation won't last forever- it's just a part of withdrawal. Give your body a chance to adjust, and your bowel movements will be regular again.

What you can do:

Drink lots of water and eat high-fibre foods like fruits and vegetables.



Hunger

Why you're feeling it:

Your brain is confusing a nicotine craving with a craving for food. Your mouth isn't busy smoking, so you have the urge to keep it busy.

How long it lasts:

2-4 weeks

What you can do:

Eat healthy meals. Try crunchy, low calorie snacks like raw veggies, pretzels, popcorn and fruit. Drink lots of water. You may also want to try gum



Irritability

Why you're feeling it:

Your body is craving nicotine

How long it lasts:

2-4 weeks

What you can do:

Take a walk or do some other kind of exercise. Try to relax: take a hot bath, listen to music, stretch, get a massage.



Lack of Focus

Why you're feeling it:

Your brain is used to getting a buzz from nicotine. Now it's learning to stay alert without nicotine.

How long it lasts:

A few weeks

What you can do:

If you can, work a little less. Take lots of breaks



Low Energy

Why you're feeling it:

Nicotine is a stimulant- it keeps your body and brain alert. Your body is learning how to stay alert without nicotine.

How long it lasts:

2-4 weeks

What you can do:

Take a nap if you're tired. Don't push yourself, and don't take on any extra work



Sleepiness

Why you're feeling it:

Nicotine has affected your brain waves and sleep patterns. Your brain is adjusting to new sleep patterns.

How long it lasts:

1 week

What you can do:

Avoid caffeine (coffee, cola).

Ways to Cope



Do something different:

When craving a cigarette, it helps to change what you're doing. Step outside. Call a friend. Read a book. Do something different. Some people find it helpful to do something with their hands when a craving strikes like picking up their knitting project or squeezing a stress ball.

Deep Breaths:

Take a deep breath break instead of a smoke break. Take a few deep breaths. Hold the last one. Breathe out slowly. Your craving for a cigarette will pass. Wait it out.

Drink Water:

This flushes the nicotine and other chemicals out of your system faster. It can help keep your mouth busy.