



How to say “no” to smoking triggers

Try these tips to help you stay smoke-free.

Way to go! You've quit smoking. To help you have long-term success, you'll want to avoid and deal with any triggers that can make you reach for a cigarette. By understanding these four triggers, you can be ready to overcome them and stay smoke-free.

1

Emotional triggers



Having strong emotions such as boredom, loneliness, anxiety or excitement can cause you to remember how smoking helped you feel better or less stressed.

How to handle emotional triggers:

Instead of relying on cigarettes to deal with your feelings, try these suggestions:

- Talk with a friend or family member about how you feel.
- Get some exercise so your brain releases endorphins, which are chemicals that make you feel better.
- Breathe slowly and deeply to help ease your mind and the cravings.
- Listen to relaxing music to lower your heart rate, blood pressure and stress.

For more tips on coping with stress, check out [Coping With Stress Without Smoking](https://www.smokefree.gov) at [smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov).

2

Pattern triggers



Certain activities such as driving, taking a break, drinking or talking on the phone may remind you of smoking.

How to handle pattern triggers:

Break the connection between smoking and the activity, and transfer the feeling to something else, such as:

- Chewing gum or having sugar-free candy.
- Keeping your hands busy with a squeeze ball, a coin or an activity like sewing.
- Going for a walk, bike riding, swimming or other type of exercise.
- Switching up your routine, such as brushing your teeth right away after eating.

3 Social triggers



Being around people who smoke in places such as at a bar, party, concert or social event can make you crave a cigarette.

How to handle social triggers:

Avoid places where people smoke and:

- Ask friends not to smoke around you.
- Let your family and friends know you've quit and ask for their support.

4 Withdrawal triggers



If you've smoked a long time, you'll probably go through withdrawal when you quit and crave nicotine. Triggers for withdrawal include smelling cigarettes, holding a lighter or matches, wanting to do something with your hands or mouth, or feeling restless.

How to handle withdrawal triggers:

Do something to take your mind off cigarettes and the craving, such as:

- Keeping healthy snacks in places like your car or where you used to smoke.
- Playing your favorite songs and singing along.
- Distracting yourself with a book, magazine or crossword puzzle.
- Going outside or to a place that you don't associate with smoking.

To help you deal with cravings and triggers, ask your LiveHealth Online Tobacco Free health coach for help in ordering nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) for free or check out smokefree.gov for more tips.

Now you're ready to face your triggers – before they even start. You can do this!



Sources:

Smokefree.gov website, *Know Your Triggers* (accessed June 2018): smokefree.gov/challenges-when-quitting/cravings-triggers/know-your-triggers.
National Cancer Institute website, *How To Handle Withdrawal Symptoms and Triggers When You Decide To Quit Smoking* (accessed June 2018): cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco/withdrawal-fact-sheet#q3.

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