

# Handling Stress



Many people believe that smoking helps them cope with stress – this is often a problem when it comes to stopping smoking. Many people also feel that some people use smoking as a self-medicating method to relieve stress.

Smoking is not, in fact, an effective means of managing stress. The feeling of relaxation is temporary and soon gives way to withdrawal symptoms and increased cravings. So, although smoking reduces withdrawal symptoms, which are similar to the feelings of anxiety, it does not reduce anxiety or deal with the underlying causes.



## Helpful Hints

- ▶ Think positively. It does help to feel good about yourself after all, you have done one of the best things you can do – you have stopped smoking. You will feel better, be healthier and have more money to spend.
- ▶ Talk problems over with someone you trust.
- ▶ Take care of yourself; try to eat well and get enough sleep and physical activity.
- ▶ Get moving; research shows that regular activity improves your mood. Even going for a short walk may help.
- ▶ Take one day at a time; do not overload yourself by worrying about what might happen tomorrow or the next day.
- ▶ Have some fun; try to find something you enjoy doing each day.

## Useful resources

NHS Every Mind Matters: [www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/](http://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/)