

THINKING ABOUT QUITTING SMOKING?



A brief guide to help you understand the effects of smoking on your mind and body, and the support on offer to help you quit!

It is well known that quitting smoking is beneficial for your physical health, but studies show that stopping smoking can also have a positive impact on your mental health.

WITHIN DAYS TO WEEKS OF QUITTING SMOKING



Your breathing may become easier and your energy levels may increase.



Also, your blood circulation may improve when you quit smoking.

THESE IMPROVEMENTS TO YOUR HEALTH COULD ALLOW YOU TO



Carry out more physical activities, including walking, and other forms of exercise.

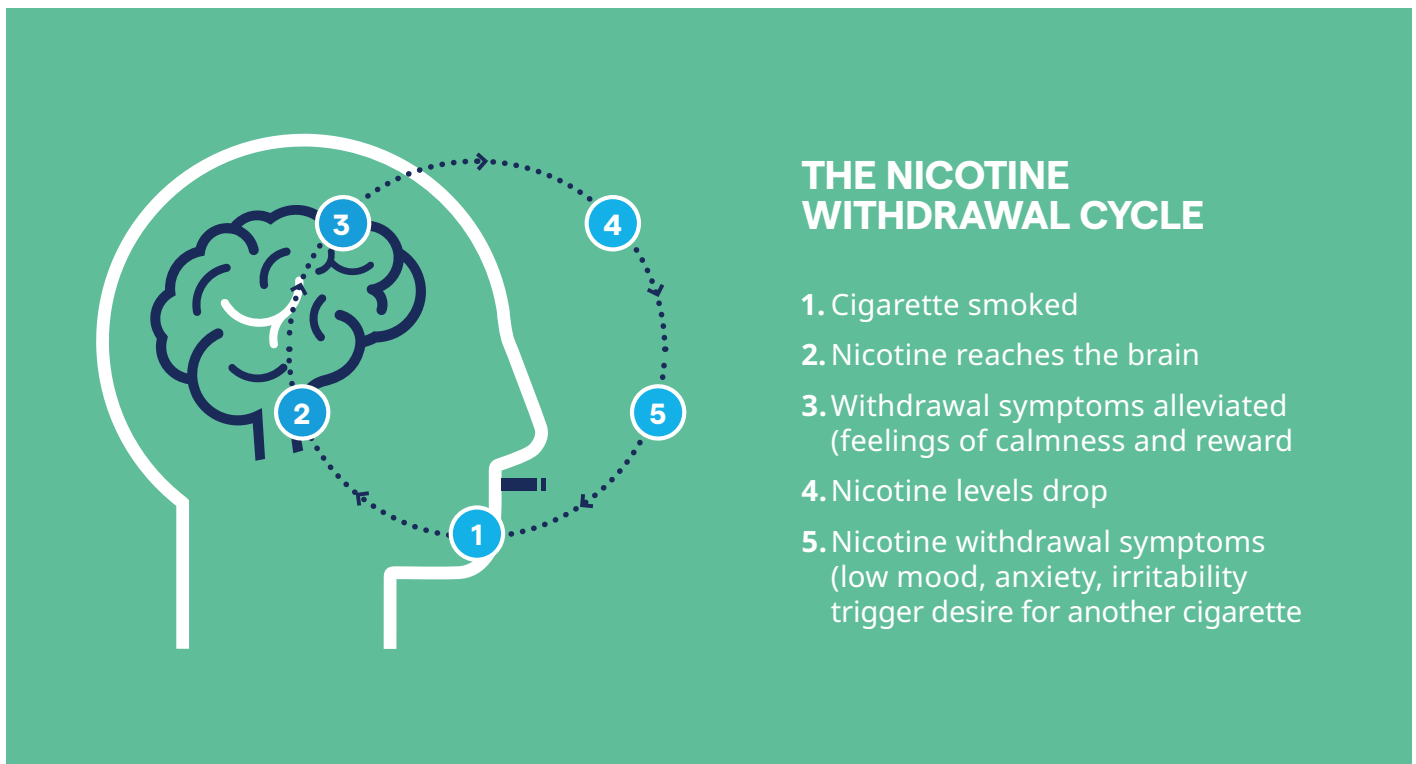


As well as doing your day-to-day activities.

BUT WHY CAN QUITTING SMOKING FEEL DIFFICULT?



Cigarettes contain a substance called nicotine which rushes to your brain when you smoke. However, the nicotine does not last long in your brain – when the nicotine levels drop, your brain and body go into a state of ‘withdrawal’. Nicotine withdrawal may trigger feelings of irritability, anxiety, stress and low mood and can make you crave another cigarette.



Over time, if you continue to smoke, your brain needs more and more nicotine to keep away those withdrawal symptoms; this is known as nicotine ‘tolerance’. Nicotine tolerance can increase your cravings for cigarettes and cause unpleasant withdrawal symptoms more often throughout your day – this can make you want to smoke more and more.

To quit smoking, the nicotine withdrawal cycle needs to be broken so that, with time, your unpleasant withdrawal symptoms do not interrupt your life anymore!

We understand that quitting smoking is challenging, but research shows that successfully quitting smoking can help to positively impact your mental as well as your physical health – often, ex-smokers say they experience less anxiety and depressive symptoms once they have quit smoking.

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE TO HELP ME QUIT SMOKING?



It has been shown that willpower alone may not be sufficient to successfully quit smoking – this is why it is recommended to have behavioural support, in combination with medication. It is up to you what avenue of support you choose – it's worth talking this through with someone you trust so you choose the right option for you!

For more information, please discuss further with your healthcare professional.

What are your motivations to quit smoking? Are there any factors that you feel will make stopping smoking challenging?

Think about your motivations to quit smoking, the potential challenges, and how you could overcome these challenges using the table below:

	QUITTING SMOKING	CONTINUING TO SMOKE
BENEFITS OF THIS BEHAVIOUR		
DRAWBACKS OF THIS BEHAVIOUR		