

# Quitting Smoking

It doesn't happen to everyone, but some people can put on weight when they quit smoking. Remember, quitting smoking is a tremendous achievement and the health benefits are far greater, even if you do put on some weight.

Nicotine is an appetite suppressant. It speeds up your metabolism and affects your taste. When you quit smoking food tastes better and you feel hungrier.

Celebrate your success:-

- Keep active – activity increases your metabolic rate.
- Eat a healthy diet
- Treat yourself – use the money you would spend on cigarettes to buy other things you enjoy. Buy yourself your favourite magazine or a book, get your hair done or go out with friends.
- Try not to let weight worries distract you from your main goal – quitting smoking.

## Keep Active

Keeping active keeps your body fit, helps maintain a healthy body weight, reduces your risk of developing diabetes and heart disease and makes you feel good!

- Be active every day in as many ways as possible. Join in children's games, walk to the shop, walk your children to school, do some gardening. Walking, gardening, jogging, cycling and swimming are examples of activity, but so is housework, using the stairs and dancing.
- Try to be active for at least 30 minutes each day, more if you can.

Plan your quit attempt and make sure you aren't tempted to replace cigarettes with high fat foods. You don't need to go on a special diet when quitting smoking. The ideas below will help you to avoid over-eating when you first stop smoking.

## Quitting tips

- Take time to enjoy your food. Don't eat on the run.
- Always have breakfast. Don't let yourself get too hungry. This can increase the cravings for high fat and high sugar foods.
- Eat regularly. Skipping meals makes you hungry.
- Eat when you are truly hungry – rather than when you are angry, bored, tired or craving a cigarette.
- If you need to eat have a low fat snack (eg fruit, bread, glass of trim milk, pottle of yoghurt, rice crackers) handy to nibble on.
- Cut down or avoid foods and drinks, especially alcohol, that you usually have with a cigarette.
- Drink water throughout the day. Try taking a drink bottle with you.

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- If you are used to having a cigarette to mark the end of a meal, find something else, like a drink of water, brushing your teeth, chewing sugar-free gum or eating a piece of fruit.

### **Eating Well**

You need a variety of healthy foods from the four food groups every day to keep healthy.

#### **Vegetables and fruits**

- Have three or more servings of vegetables each day (a serving is generally what fits in the palm of your hand).
- At your main meal aim for ½ your dinner plate to be full of vegetables or salad.
- Increase the amount of vegetables you eat by having salad vegetables in sandwiches, adding more vegetables to cooked foods and having vegetables as snacks.
- Eat fruit at least twice each day – fresh, canned or cooked.
- Finish your meal with a piece of fruit.

#### **Breads and cereals**

- Eat at least six servings of breads and cereals every day (a serving is one slice of bread, ½ cup of cereal or 1 cup of cooked pasta or rice).
- Choose wholemeal and wholegrain varieties.
- Eat bread as a snack food – try rolls, toasted sandwiches, muffins, bread or fruit bread.
- Try different fillings to have with your bread – salad, banana, baked beans, canned fish, vegemite or lean meat or chicken. Go easy on spreads like butter and margarine and fatty fillings like mayonnaise, sausages, salami and lots of cheese.
- Have breakfast cereal or popcorn as a snack.

#### **Milk and milk products**

- Have at least two servings of low-fat milk and milk products each day. Women should aim for three servings each day. A serving is a glass of milk, 2 slices of cheese or a pottle of yoghurt.
- Use Trim milk or occasionally try flavoured milk made from reduced-fat milk. When shopping for cheese choose one that's lower in fat like Edam.
- Low fat milk and milk products help to make you feel full. They also contain plenty of calcium, which is important for strong bones.

#### **Meat and alternatives**

- Have at least one serving of lean meat, chicken or seafood, or an alternative such as eggs, dried peas, beans or lentils. A serving is about 120g meat, fish, chicken or pork (remove the fat), one egg or ½ cup of beans.

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### **Tips to reduce fat and sugar**

- Set goals and make 1-2 changes at a time.
- Use lower fat milk, cheese, yoghurt and salad dressings.
- Choose lean cuts of meat – this saves time and waste.
- Have takeaways occasionally, rather than as a regular part of your diet.
- Boil, bake, steam, microwave or grill foods rather than frying or roasting in fat.
- Use only a little oil, margarine or butter for cooking and as a spread.
- Go easy on soft drinks and fruit juice.

Keep active, enjoy a healthy choice of foods and be realistic!

### **For further information**

- Check out the Ministry of Health leaflets, “Healthy Weight for Adults” and “Eating for Healthy Adult New Zealanders”, available from your local public health unit
- The PEGS Programme (Preparation, Education, Giving Up and Staying smokefree) is available at all Pegasus Health Medical Centres in Christchurch. The GPs and practice nurses providing the programme offer individualised health advice, behavioural strategies to make quitting easier, advice on nicotine replacement therapy, and ongoing support and encouragement. Subsidised NRT (if appropriate) is also available as part of the PEGS programme.
- For help, support and information call the Quitline  
0800 778 778

Adapted from The Quit Group. Quitting Smoking and Weight Gain.

Quitline: 0800 778 778

[www.quit.org.nz](http://www.quit.org.nz)

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**Canterbury**  
District Health Board  
Te Pori i aua o Waitaha