



BE A QUITTER: QUIT SMOKING



MAY 2014

It's okay to be a quitter when you're quitting a bad habit like smoking. In fact, if you're a smoker, quitting smoking is the single most important step you can make toward a longer, healthier life.

Unlike some healthy lifestyle changes that take time to make a difference (such as eating better or working out), quitting smoking has immediate health benefits. For example, in:

- **20 MINUTES:**
your blood pressure and your heart rate decrease to normal levels
- **24 HOURS:**
the carbon monoxide level in your blood returns to normal
- **2 WEEKS:**
your risk of heart attack begins to decrease and your lung function will greatly improve
- **THE LONG TERM:**
your overall risk for heart disease, stroke and cancer decreases

It's never too late to stop smoking. If you need support or more information, the American Lung Association is a great resource. Call **1-800-LUNGUSA** or visit **LungUSA.org**.

So, what are you waiting for? Start your campaign to quit today.

References: WebMD.com and LungUSA.org

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FIVE TIPS FOR BEING A SUCCESSFUL QUITTER

- 1. Set a “quit smoking” date.**
Mark the date on a calendar and focus your attention on your first step toward a healthier lifestyle.
- 2. Identify (and avoid) your smoking triggers.**
Examples include enjoying your morning cup of coffee or seeing an ashtray. Opt for tea instead and remove smoking reminders.
- 3. Have healthy snacks on hand to curb cravings.**
Stock up on sugar-free gum or hard candy for when you crave a cigarette (especially in the beginning).
- 4. Get moving.**
Physical activity can help ward off nicotine cravings and also help reduce stress.
- 5. Look for support.**
Tell your friends and family you’re quitting so they can support your decision. You can also join a support group in your area (check out Cancer.org or LungUSA.org for groups near you).

Before your quit date, you may want to talk to your doctor about nicotine replacement therapy (gum, lozenges, inhalers and prescription medications), which helps many people successfully quit smoking.



A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE FOR TARA BROWN

A Success Story

Tara Brown’s future looks a lot healthier now that she has made significant lifestyle changes. Read her motivating story to see what she did to achieve her goals.

“After two years of being pre-diabetic, I was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in October 2013. Before I was diagnosed, I figured that since I avoided diabetes for this long, I would just have to change my diet at some point. When the doctor told me that I had to check my blood glucose six times a day before and after meals, exercise five times a week and see a nutritionist—I knew it was time to make some changes—and I was ready.

I made the appointment with a nutritionist and began my prescribed meal plan. I also began exercising. Since my diagnosis I’ve had some high and low points. At my lowest point, I refused to test my glucose and follow the meal plan because it was difficult. With the help of my NextSteps coach and

my FloridaBlue teammates, I eventually pulled myself up and changed my attitude.

I am happy to report that hard work and determination has paid off. As of May 2014, my A1C [a blood test for diabetes] level is at 5.8, down from 6.5 in October 2013, and I’ve lost a total of 16 pounds!

I still struggle every day to maintain a healthy lifestyle, but I do notice it’s becoming easier to exercise regularly and eat healthier. I’m even getting more creative in my cooking to keep me on the right track. The best part is: I’ve been an inspiration to my family and teammates who in turn, inspire me to keep at it.

Hard work truly does pay off! I have a ways to go, but the future sure looks a lot healthier.”

Next Steps Registered Nurses provide FREE individualized health coaching to assist you in making healthy lifestyle choices. Health coaching sessions are offered by phone or email:

Email: nextsteps@floridablue.com

Call: 1-800-477-3736, ext. 54837 TTY, 1-800-955-8771 or 711
Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. EST

References: *WebMD.com and LungUSA.org*

ask THE HEALTH COACH



Q I have bad breath and it's embarrassing. How do I get rid of my smelly breath?

A What you eat and poor oral hygiene are two main causes of bad breath (called halitosis). Strong smelling food such as garlic, onions, some milk-based products (like cheese), coffee, smoking and some medications can all cause bad breath. Bad breath can also be caused by certain medical conditions such as dry mouth, diabetes, gastritis, infections in the throat, nose or lungs, as well as liver and kidney problems. If bad breath is a persistent problem, talk to your doctor or dentist.

Here are some tips to keep your breath fresh:

- Brush at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Replace your toothbrush every 30 days.
- Use a tongue scraper to remove odor-causing bacteria that brushing can miss.
- Floss regularly and/or use an interdental brush to remove food trapped between your teeth.
- Chew sugar-free gum to stimulate saliva and keep your mouth moist.
- See your dentist at least once a year for a deep cleaning and a review of your oral hygiene practices.
- Quit smoking to eliminate stale smoker's breath and reduce your risk for gum disease, which is another cause of bad breath.

Reference: WebMD.com

fresh AND HEALTHY RECIPE OF THE MONTH



MIXED LETTUCE SALAD WITH CUCUMBER HERB VINAIGRETTE • Servings: 4

Oak leaf and baby romaine lettuces are so tender that they are best eaten straight from the garden or at least within a day or two of picking. Mild and delicate, they pair wonderfully with peppery radishes and chopped hard-boiled eggs in this easy salad.

Ingredients

- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp prepared horseradish
- 1 tsp sugar
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ small garlic clove
- 1 pinch salt
- 2 cups Red Oak or other red leaf lettuce
- 2 cups baby romaine lettuce
- ½ cup sliced radishes
- 4 scallions, sliced
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and chopped
- 1 small cucumber, peeled and chopped

Directions

For vinaigrette: Puree cucumber,

oil, vinegar, chives, parsley, yogurt, mustard, horseradish, sugar and ½ tsp salt in a blender until smooth.

For salad: Season a wooden salad bowl by rubbing with garlic and a pinch of salt. Chop the garlic and add to the bowl along with lettuce. Pour ¼ cup of vinaigrette over the greens; toss to coat. (Cover and refrigerate the remaining vinaigrette for up to 3 days.) Serve the salad garnished with radishes, scallions and hard-boiled eggs.

Nutrition Information (per 1 cup serving): calories 83; fat 6g; saturated fat 1g; cholesterol 106g; carbohydrates 4g; dietary fiber 2g; sugars 0g; protein 5g; sodium 152mg.

Recipe courtesy of EatingWell.com

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