

WITHDRAWAL... What is it and how do I cope?

Withdrawal from nicotine is a short but intense phase of the quit process!

When stopping the use of tobacco you may experience nicotine withdrawal. The withdrawal symptoms may be the most intense during the first 48 hours. After that, symptoms may lessen in intensity, but may be around for up to six months or so. Below are some common withdrawal symptoms and some ways to cope with them.

Symptoms	For how long?	How to cope with it?
Irritability	2-4 weeks	Take a walk or hot bath; deep breathing exercises; talk with a friend
Fatigue	2-4 weeks	Get extra rest and exercise; don't push yourself; drink water
Insomnia	2-4 weeks	Avoid caffeine after 6pm; deep breathing and relaxation techniques
Coughing, Dry Throat	A few days	Drink plenty of fluids; use cough drops, gum or hard candy
Dizziness	A few weeks	Get fresh air; change positions slowly; move cautiously
Lack of concentration	A few weeks	Change activities; deep breathing; plan workload accordingly; listen to music
Stomach pain, gas, constipation	1-2 weeks	Drink more fluids; increase fiber in diet (vegetables, fruits, whole grains)
Weight gain	Up to several months	Make an appointment with a registered dietician at Student Health Service
Craving for a cigarette	Frequent for the first few days, can last for months or years	Find a distraction; drink water; chew gum; brush your teeth
Headaches	1-2 weeks	Find ways to relax; take a hot bath or shower; increase physical activity; cut down on caffeine.

Adapted from American Psychiatric Association and Iowa Quit Line



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BM 06/11

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