

# Your Friend is Getting Ready To Quit...

Center for  
Health  
Education  
and  
Promotion  
288-5217

## AND YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT TO DO TO HELP!

Is there anything I can do that will really help? YES!

- ◇ If your friend decides to quit, they might look to you for support.
- ◇ If they have not decided to quit yet, you can help them think of reasons to quit and decide on a quit date.

A couple of things to remember when trying to help someone quit:

- ◇ Quitting is different for each smoker, so ask what you can do that will be helpful.
- ◇ Have confidence in your friend! Tell them that you think they can make it, even if they have tried before. Actually, many smokers try to quit several times before being successful in quitting.
- ◇ The first few days will be the hardest for the quitter. So be ready to talk. They may just want to talk about a situation that came up or something that is going to come up. Listen, and offer tips, if appropriate.
- ◇ Check in on the person. Call or visit. Don't start with, "Are you still quit?" Ask them how they are feeling or if they need anything from you.
- ◇ Let them know that you care about them (quit or not) and that you admire them for trying to quit. Nagging, preaching or hassling just doesn't work...try not to do this!
- ◇ Your praise helps. By giving your friend a card or flowers will let them know you are thinking about them. Take them for lunch that day, not promises of lunch next week.
- ◇ Do things together. Go places that people can't smoke. For example, a non-smoking restaurant, the movies, or the mall.
- ◇ Try to understand where they are coming from. Their cigarettes have been around for a long time. Understand that they might not be sure if they want to quit.
- ◇ When your friend gets the urge to smoke tell them it is okay to call you. When they call you, remind them that the urge to smoke will pass in about 3 minutes. Try to keep them on the phone for those 3 minutes and see how they feel.
- ◇ You can encourage them to leave the place they are at when they call you while they are having an urge to smoke.
- ◇ When your friend is feeling the urge to smoke, encourage them to breathe deep. It will help your friend relax a little bit.

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My friend is tempted to smoke all the time. It is hard to deal with!

- ◇ Even if they don't say so, they appreciate your help. You are doing a great job! Try to stay with it. Your friend has been addicted to cigarettes for a long time, it will be hard for them. Try to be understanding.
- ◇ Your friend is going through a hard time. Be prepared - they may be unfriendly or even nasty. But you're doing a great thing. The bad times are only temporary.
- ◇ Sometimes by listening to how your friend feels, it is easier to understand where they are coming from. If your friend is having a good day, tell them you want to hear that too! Take a little credit for them doing well!

They are smoking again. Now what?

- ◇ Don't blame them. This is not a failure. Quitting attempts help your friend to learn to quit better the next time. It is also a learning experience for you. You can learn what led to their relapse, and help them avoid that situation next time.
- ◇ You might feel badly that they didn't quit, but don't let them know that. You might want to say something like this, "You did a great job, you quit for X days and that is great. When you try again, I will be right here to help you out."
- ◇ Reward yourself! You did a good thing in trying to help your friend quit. Now you have more information and experience to help them, or someone else, the next time.

My friend is quit. Do I still need to help them out?

- ◇ The first week and a half to two weeks will be the hardest for your friend.
- ◇ It is important to know that smokers who are going to go back to smoking usually do so within the first three months of quitting. You might want to make sure they are getting the little extra support they need in those first three months.
- ◇ Sometimes former smokers will have a puff or two of a cigarette. If your friend does have a couple puffs, you can remind them of all the reasons they wanted to quit.
- ◇ It is totally normal for a former smoker to have urges for years after they stop. As time goes by the urges become less and less, and it might be a good idea to remind your friend of that.
- ◇ Celebrate non-smoking anniversaries!