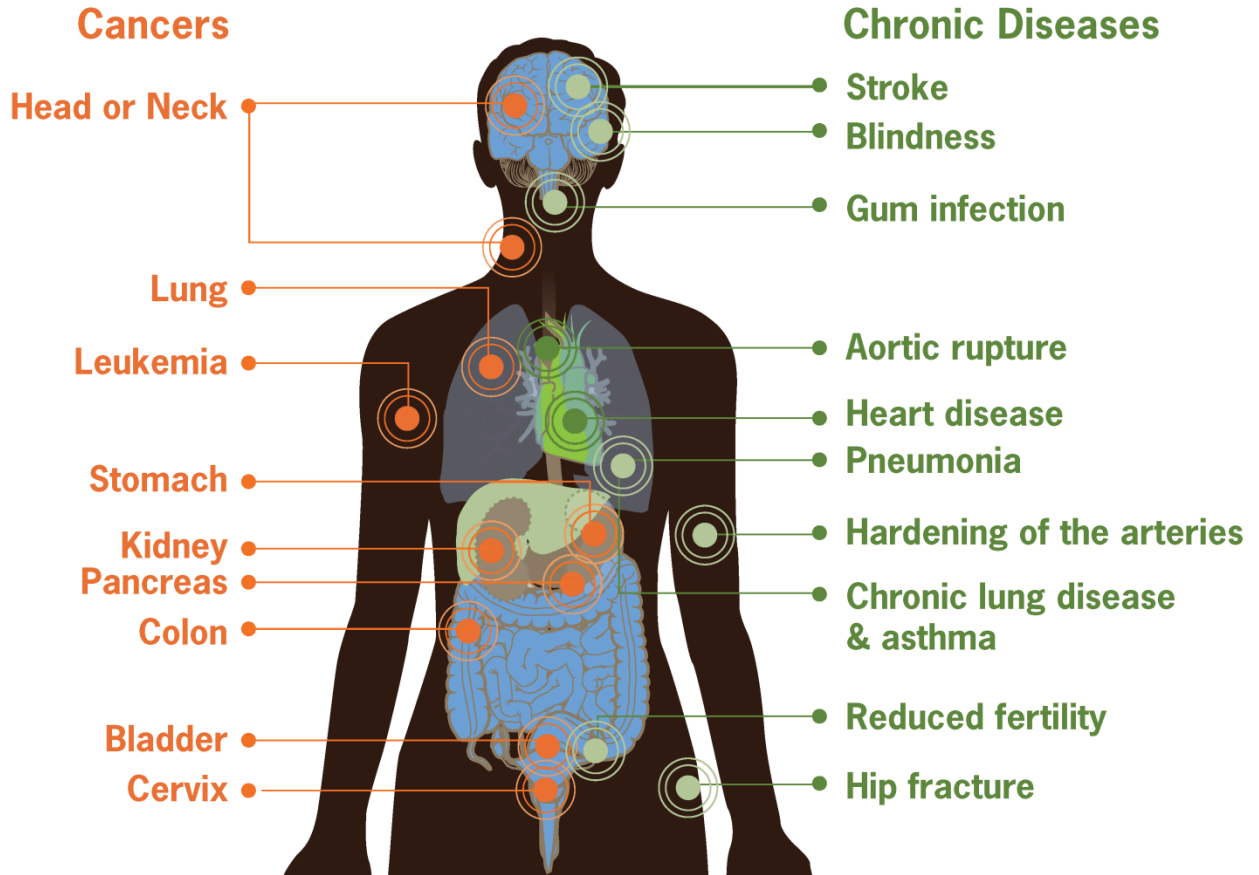


# Risks from Smoking

Smoking can damage every part of the body



My personal reasons to quit:

## Understanding nicotine withdrawal

The earliest symptoms of nicotine withdrawal are usually **cravings for a cigarette**, followed by **anxiety, anger, irritation**, and **attention problems**, leading to difficulty completing tasks. These symptoms can begin 30 minutes after smoking, and continue to rise in intensity as time goes on. **Most of these symptoms peak approximately 3-5 days after quitting, and then begin to taper off.** That is because by around day 3, the body has cleared itself of all of the nicotine from the last cigarette.

Physical symptoms throughout the first week include **headache, increased appetite, dizziness, constipation, stomach pain, fatigue, and insomnia.** In addition, many smokers begin to develop a **tightness in the chest**, begin to **cough**, or notice an **increase in mucus.** This is because the respiratory system has begun to heal, and is in the process of removing the irritants that it was previously unable to do.

**The first week usually brings the majority of withdrawal symptoms. Moving into the following weeks, they gradually begin to fade away.**

### Tools for Coping with Nicotine Withdrawal

#### Irritability:

Duration: 2-4 weeks

Tip: Distract yourself by engaging in a hobby or exercise. Reward yourself for progress you've made – go out to dinner, watch a movie, or buy yourself a special treat. Take some deep breaths. Try a nicotine replacement therapy like nicotine gum or patch.



#### Fatigue:

Duration: 1-2 weeks

Tips: Take naps or brisk walks. Avoid caffeine. Try nicotine gum or patch

### **Insomnia:**

Duration: 1-2 weeks

Tip: Try relaxation techniques, take an evening walk or a warm bath. Avoid caffeine after 6 p.m.



### **Depression:**

Duration: 2-3 weeks

Tip: Exercise is the best way to improve your mood. Try taking a brisk 15-20 minute walk. Talk to a friend, write in a journal, volunteer your time helping others. Engage in a hobby or pleasant activity.

### **Stomach pains, constipation, gas:**

Duration: 2-3 days

Tip: Eat lots of fiber like fruits, vegetables, bran, and cereal. Drink 6-8 glasses of water each day. Exercise. Avoid caffeine.

### **Increased appetite:**

Duration: 1-4 weeks (usually most intense in the first week)

Tip: Be careful not to replace cigarettes with food. Eat balanced meals. Have low calorie snacks on hand. Drink plenty of water. Try a nicotine replacement therapy like nicotine gum or patch.

### **Coughing, dry throat:**

Duration: Cough 2-4 weeks, dry throat 2-3 days

Tip: Drink cold water or tea, chew gum, or have cough drops or hard candy on hand



## My Plan of Coping with Nicotine Withdrawal

When I have a craving, I can **distract** myself with:

When I feel irritated and/or anxious, I will **relax** by:

I will ask the following people to **support** me (include what you will ask them to do)

When I have cravings or withdrawal symptoms, I will **remind myself of the benefits** I expect to get from quitting:

Triggers (people, places, and things) I plan to avoid:

My Quit Date: