



Quit Tobacco

# Staying Quit: Making It to the End Zone

It's almost the end of the game, the score is close, and, just as you were about to make the touchdown—cravings are tackling you again. Does this mean it's going to be a shutout? NO WAY! This time, you will plan a clever, two-pronged defense. This time, you will make the play and you will score. That's because after several practice sessions, you've figured out that new research is in the playbook. In more and more studies, doctors and researchers are figuring out that most patients need some form of individual or group support, as well as cessation medication. In fact, the U.S. Health and Human Services' Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: 2008 Update reports that the best chance at beating tobacco is when you use both support and medication to quit smoking. Only 5 percent of smokers can quit cold-turkey. So, bottom line, if you've gotten sacked by tobacco before, that doesn't mean you're not going to stay quit this time.

## USE THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB

If you have tried to quit smoking or chewing tobacco before or are addicted, you might benefit from using two forms of medication at the same time, such as nicotine gum and medication, as well as joining a support group.

Quitting is not one size fits all. If you are the type of person who enjoys the group environment, don't go it alone. Some quitters benefit from extra support, such as individual or group counseling, telephone quitlines, or live chat Web counselors. Ongoing counseling equips the quitter with coping and problem-solving skills. Having the mutual support from other quitters is the invaluable safety net some quitters require when they are having a weak moment. In fact, research is beginning to show that quitters who are part of a group have a better chance of quitting than those using individual counseling. You may have heard of other, less traditional methods of quitting. But quitters beware: none of these other methods is supported by scientific research.

There is no solid evidence that these alternative methods, such as hypnosis, meditation, or acupuncture work for people trying to quit smoking. Meditation may help you relax, however, as you go through the quitting process, and that may be just what you need to handle the withdrawal and the stress.

## PICK A POISON

We've seen lots of media hype about transitioning from smoking to spit chewing tobacco or snus in an effort to lower your health risks. However, a new study of smokers in the United States shows that switchers were no more likely to quit than those who didn't switch. If you think about it, how are you beating nicotine by just switching to another way of using it? Even worse, spit tobacco can be more harmful to use than cigarettes.

And, don't believe anything you hear about using tobacco lozenges. The Food and Drug Administration ruled that they are not smoking cessation aids. In fact, since the tobacco lozenges contain nicotine, there's a chance they'll just keep you addicted.

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When we sift through the complicated research, one finding is crystal clear: while counseling and medication are effective when used separately, the combination of counseling and medication is more effective than either alone.

## DO YOU BELIEVE IN SECOND CHANCES

How about third, fourth, and fifth chances? We do! And that's why we encourage you to take the chance on your success until it sticks. Quitting takes practice, and if you don't succeed the first or second time you try to quit, the only mistake you can make is to give up on yourself. The resources, the support, and the tools are out there—to make the touchdown! We're here to support you, and we won't give up. Now it's your turn to take another chance at a tobacco-free, healthy life. Quit Tobacco—Make Everyone Proud.

