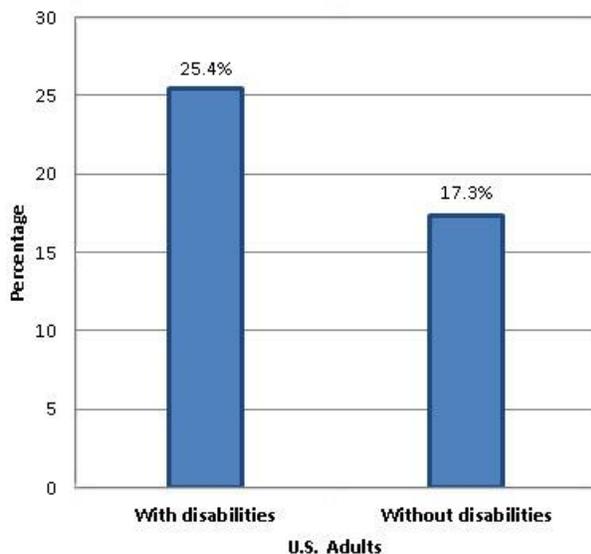


DisabilityCampaign.org

How to Quit Smoking

Every year, cigarette smoking kills almost 1 in 5 adults — making tobacco the leading preventable cause of death in the U.S. Unfortunately, the number of adults who smoke cigarettes is higher among people with disabilities than those without disabilities.

Percentage of U.S. Adults who Currently Smoke Cigarettes by Disability Status



2011 National Health Interview Survey, CDC

A 2011 National Health Interview Survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that people with disabilities are more likely to smoke: with 1 in 4 adults with disabilities being smokers, compared to less than 1 in 5 adults without disabilities.

Though it's well known that smoking poses health risks, such as an increased chance of developing lung cancer or having a stroke, these can be even more serious for someone living with a disability, especially those whose disability has resulted in limited lung capacity, increased blood pressure, or heart disease. Smoking can also worsen medication side effects.

How to Quit Smoking if You Have a Disability

1. **Make a list of what you like or enjoy about smoking.** Is it that it keeps you from eating too much? Is it something you tend to do when you're stressed? Is it something you do more often with friends? Asking yourself these questions and writing them down will help you determine what you need to address as you seek to quit smoking.



2. **Do it for YOU.** You need to care about yourself and your wellbeing to be able to be there for others. You already have a lot on your plate with a disability, why complicate your health further by smoking? Jot down why you think quitting smoking would make you a better person (for example, think of qualities such as: better health, self-control, and determination). Let those qualities be an encouragement to you whenever you're tempted to pick up a cigarette.



3. **Have an accountability partner.** It's hard to quit on your own. Find someone — be it a relative, friend, or coworker — who will hold you accountable and with whom you can be honest as you go through this journey of quitting smoking. We all need cheerleaders in our life!

4. **Try nicotine replacement products.** Over-the-counter options include nicotine patches, gum, and lozenges. Not everyone can quit cold-turkey, and some people find these effective in helping them to gradually stop smoking.
5. **Talk to your doctor.** Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body. Your doctor will be able to evaluate your health and give you a realistic picture of how smoking is harming your body. In addition to over-the-counter medicines to help you quit smoking, your doctor may provide you with a prescription medicine such as Chantix, Nicotrol, or Zyban.

6. **Minimize time spent with other smokers.** The reality is that it's easy to do something when everyone else is doing it. If the smell of smoke is tempting, try to stay away from it.



7. **Think about your loved ones.** It's well known that secondhand smoke poses health threats to people who reside with smokers, but did you know that the CDC reports that children exposed to secondhand smoke are 50% more likely to develop learning disabilities? For parents, thinking about the wellbeing of their children can be a strong motivator to quit smoking. Remember, your family and friends care about you — and your wellbeing matters to them, as well.
8. **Join a smoking cessation programs.** Many hospitals, clinics, and health insurances have smoking cessation programs that encourage patients to quit smoking. Your workplace might even have one, too!
9. **Try behavioral therapies.** You could work with a therapist or counselor on how to problem solve and better manage your stress. He or she may recommend carrying around a stress ball or chewing gum to keep your hands/mouth distracted whenever you feel like reaching for a cigarette.

**10. Call the National Quitline Service at
1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).**

This is a free telephone support service that helps people who want to stop smoking or using tobacco. Callers are then routed to their state quitlines, which offer several types of quit information and services, including:

- free support, advice, and counseling from experienced quitline coaches
- a personalized quit plan
- practical information on how to quit
- free or discounted medications
- Mailed self-help materials and more!



Quitting smoking is possible! With the right resources and support group, you can get to a healthier you.

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