

QUIT SMOKING!

By addressing both the physical and emotional challenges of quitting smoking, your chances of success will be much higher. Incorporating new healthy habits instead of picking up cigarettes will help substantially. Please keep these suggestions in mind throughout the quitting process:

Here are two methods that work best for quitting smoking with acupuncture:

1) Quit cold turkey. Smoke your last cigarette about 24 hours before your first treatment (or, at most, 12 hours before your acupuncture session), so that the acupuncture is substituting for the nicotine fix. That way you will really feel the results of acupuncture.

2) Use a plan to cut down. Try the following method to measure your progress: refill an empty pack everyday with the maximum amount of cigarettes you have decided you can smoke for the day. If you can get to bed at night without smoking the full amount you will feel great! Continue on this path over the course of two to three weeks, until you quit entirely.

If you feel irritated or anxious, take a walk for 10 minutes, preferably outdoors. Changing your environment is a tremendously helpful way to fight off cravings, as it allows you to refocus your mind and move your qi. Stagnant qi, in Chinese medicine, is what creates irritability or tension. Exercise moves qi and releases this tension and irritability, helping you to feel more relaxed and calm.

Call a friend or family member if you're having a difficult time. It helps you to take your mind off of any cravings that you are experiencing.

Avoid being present around other smokers. This is a big trigger unless you've quit entirely.

To clear up phlegm and improve your breathing, drink one lemon a day squeezed into water, or drink a glass of water with 2 tablespoons of apple cider vinegar (the raw, unfiltered type – such as Bragg or Spectrum, available at health food stores) three times a day.

Replace the urge to smoke with the help of sugarless gum, flavored toothpicks, carrot sticks and healthy snacks.

Open a new savings account at your bank. Put the difference in savings from what you spend on tobacco when you quit or cut back toward what you spend during your acupuncture treatments, and pay attention to the extra money that continues to build up in your account over the next six months. Then when you haven't smoked in 6 months from the time you have quit, you can use that money to **reward yourself** by treating yourself to an enjoyable experience or buying something that you have always wanted. This is a great motivator and reward for your hard work!

Your treatment plan:

Five treatments the first week, two treatments per week on the second and third weeks, once a week for the next four weeks and after that once a month for the next four months (or more often as desired/needed) to abstain from smoking. Coming in for treatments over a period of six months is good insurance against picking up cigarettes again.

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