

GIVING UP SMOKING FOR LOVE
BY: Melissa Jeremiah, RN
Director of Hoosier Uplands Home Health and Hospice

I know what all you smokers are thinking, “This is another one of those gripe sessions from someone who has probably never even lit up a cigarette!” Well I have been smoke free now since 1987, the year that I met my future husband, who has always been a non-smoker. My Uncle Robert said that you give up things not out of fear, but out of love. I always knew how bad smoking was for a person, but I never wanted to quit, until I met my future husband. I am sure that you all have a loved one that wants to keep you around longer, and if you won’t quit for yourself, maybe you can quit for them.

There may of been some of you that made this your New Year’s Resolution. You may have failed and are now thinking, “I will never be able to quit!” Remember that the average person makes two - four failed attempts before they are able to quit. Before you attempt to quit again try to figure out what caused you to pick up that cigarette again. You need to keep in mind, as well, that if you are fairly dependent on cigarettes you need to use multiple sources of help in your quitting plan to increase your odds of success. Remember the more help you have, the better your chances of quitting smoking and staying smoke free.

Step 1: Preparing to Quit

- #1. Write out the reasons you want to quit smoking. Tape photos of your reasons to your paper. Those grandkids smiling up at you, may give you that added push you need.**
- #2. Set a quit date, usually within 10 days to several weeks. If you smoke more at work, try quitting on the weekend. If you smoke more when socializing, quit on a week day.**
- #3. Write out the barriers you have to quitting. These may include such barriers as my spouse smokes or I’ll gain weight.**
- #4. Write out specific plans ahead of time for dealing with temptations. Identify two or three coping strategies that work for you such as taking a walk or calling a friend.**
- #5. Get your friends, family and co-workers cooperation. They can help by not smoking around you, listening to you and providing encouragement when you need it and leaving you alone when you need some space.**
- #6. Visit www.ffsonline.org on the internet. This is the new Freedom From Smoking online smoking cessation clinic. This clinic can be accessed day or night, seven days a week, on any schedule a smoker chooses.**

Step 2: Using Medication

- #1. Generally medications should be part of your plan for quitting smoking. However, not everyone will want or need to use them.**
- #2. As with any medication, consult with your pharmacist before using it.**
- #3. If you are pregnant or taking other medications, consult with your physician before using it.**

Step 3: Staying Smoke-Free

- #1. After getting through the first couple of weeks, staying off cigarettes is not always easy.**
- #2. You will need continued support and encouragement from family, friends and co-workers. These people won't automatically know how to encourage you. Talk to them ahead of time about what they can do to help. Also, think about who will stay positive even if you have some problems along the way.**

Information from this article was obtained in part from the American Lung Association. You can go to their website for more information on quitting smoking at www.ffsonline.org. You may contact your local American Lung Association at 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872).