

Take Control of Cravings and Urges



California
Smokers'
Helpline
1-800-NO-BUTTS

False:

After you quit smoking you will have cravings and urges to smoke forever.

True:

If you go Cold Turkey, nicotine will be out of your system within 72 hours. That's only 3 days! Most nicotine cravings last 3 to 5 minutes, but remember, as time passes they will become weaker and farther apart. It took a long time to become a smoker, so it will take some time to break free from the habit.

TRY THESE SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES:



THE FOUR D's:

- Delay** Wait it out.
 - Distract yourself** Do something else.
 - Deep breathe** Release tension.
 - Drink water** Satisfy the craving.
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THE TWO R's:

- Remind** Go over the reasons to quit.
- Refuse** Think: it's not an option.

WAYS TO HELP QUIET YOUR NOISY CIGARETTE THOUGHTS

Observe and describe your urges to help you cope with them. Keep track in a journal.

- Record your urges** How often? Count them.
- How strong? Rate them.
- How long? Time them.

Understand your urges

Every urge you've ever had has gone away, whether you've smoked or not. Your body cannot hold an urge for a long period of time.

Fight your urges

Positive thoughts and images can be powerful tools for getting through urges.

Example: Close your eyes, take a deep breath, picture yourself in a special place (beach, mountains...), and repeat positive messages like: "I look better and feel stronger," "My body is a temple," etc...