

## THINKING ABOUT QUITTING SMOKING.... BUT CONCERNED WITH WEIGHT GAIN?

**Not everyone gains weight when they quit smoking. About 1 out of 5 smokers will not gain any weight at all. For those who do, most gain under 5 kilograms (under 10 pounds).**

Most of the weight is gained within the first 3 - 6 months of quitting. There are a number of reasons why people gain weight. Follow the tips below to help maintain a healthy weight.

Some people who quit turn to food/fluids to replace smoking:

### Situation:

At the beginning, coffee breaks and social activities can be difficult. You may want to overeat to avoid smoking.

### How to cope:

- Eat only until you are comfortably full.
- Instead of a coffee break, go for an "activity break" such as a brisk walk.
- Take a buddy for support in these situations.

### Situation:

Quitting smoking can be a stressful time especially if you have withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, headache anxiety and tiredness due to lack of sleep.

### How to cope:

- Avoid caffeine and alcohol. The effect of caffeine doubles when you are quitting smoking. Alcohol may be a trigger for smoking.
- Acknowledge your feelings. Write them down in a journal.

### Situation:

To fulfill the hand to mouth habit, nibbling on food may increase.

### How to cope:

- Write down everything you eat and drink in a food journal.
- Try sugarless gum, low calorie mints, flavoured toothpicks, cut up veggies.

Your sense of taste and smell returns to normal after quitting. You may want to eat even if you are not physically hungry.

OR

You may actually be physically hungry. Nicotine suppresses appetite and quitting smoking returns your hunger to normal. This may last for several weeks after quitting.

STOP and listen to your hunger cues:

If you are physically hungry have a healthy snack such as yogurt or fruit.

## INCREASED CALORIES CAN LEAD TO WEIGHT GAIN

Increased food/fluid intake during times of quitting typically leads to an increase of 200 - 300 calories per day.

**It only takes an extra 250 calories per day for 2 weeks to gain 1 pound, without increasing your activity level. Look how easy it is to consume 250 calories.**

Small (58g) Mars Bar  
Bottle(591 mL) regular pop  
Small package (75 g) Nibs  
2 Oreo Cakesters  
4 Tbsp (very small handful) nuts  
12 pieces Starburst  
3/4 cup ice cream  
10 Werther's candy  
Small bag Sun Chips

### **Important!**

Eat 3 regular meals each day. Skipping meals can:

- Lead to overeating at the next meal or reaching for unhealthy, convenient foods.
- Cause a dip in blood sugar. A low blood sugar and/or feeling hungry may trigger a craving for a cigarette.

### **The Key to Success is Making a Healthy Eating Plan That is Right For You**

Healthy eating checklist before and during times of quitting:

- I eat 3 regular meals each day
- ✓ I choose low fat, healthy snacks such as vegetables, fruit, yogurt.
- I do not drink any alcoholic beverages.
- ✓ I record everything I eat and drink in a food journal (this includes BLT's - bites, licks and tastes!).
- I have a healthy plan in place during
- ✓ tempting situations such as social gatherings.