

Fighting the Urge

Common “urge” situations

Certain times in the day can trigger tobacco use. Take time to think about these. Are they a problem? They do not have to be.

The big one: The first puff or dip of the day - Change up what you do in the morning. Jump in the shower. Go outside for fresh air or read the paper. Say to yourself: “I am in charge of not using tobacco. This urge will go away.” Focus on the day ahead. Your plan:

With alcohol - Use of one substance can trigger use of the other. Avoid or limit alcohol use. Do not go where smoking and tobacco are allowed. Reduce time spent around other smokers and tobacco users if this is one of your triggers. Tell friends you have made the choice to quit. Remind yourself you are a non-tobacco user. Your plan:

After meals - Brush your teeth. A clean mouth and fresh breath will keep you from using tobacco. Get up from the table and wash the dishes. It may help to go out and walk. Start a new hobby. Keep busy. Your plan:

Drinking coffee - Have coffee in a different place or eat a healthy snack. Have tea instead of coffee. Tell friends you have made the choice to quit. Remind yourself of the choice you have made to be tobacco free. Your plan:

In the car - Try taking a new route or changing your mode of transportation. Take a train or bus. Carpool, bicycle or walk if you can. If you are stuck in traffic, try turning your radio to a new style of music. Listen to audio books on long trips. Your plan:

Dealing with stress - Know your stress signs. You may feel tense, have a fast heartbeat or a nervous stomach. Say: “I need to take care of myself.” Try taking deep breaths or get up and walk around. If you have time, take a hot bath or meditate. Ask for support from your partner, friend or provider. Your plan:

When you are bored - Get busy! Work on a hobby. Chew gum or snack on healthy food. Make a list of things you can do when you are bored. Remind yourself of all the good you are doing by being tobacco free. Your plan:

Dealing with other tobacco users and social situations - Tell friends or family members what they should do while you are quitting. “Do not smoke around me.” “Do not leave your cigarettes around the house.” “Do not offer me a cigarette or pinch.” “My house and car are tobacco-free.” You may need to limit time spent with other tobacco users until you feel more confident or comfortable. Call or talk to a friend who will support you. Your plan:

Talking on the phone - Keep hands busy by playing with a paper clip or straw. Chew on a straw, toothpick or gum. File or clip your nails. Say to yourself: “I do not need to use tobacco while I am on the phone.” Your plan:

After sex - Let your partner know this is a trigger for you. Talk to your partner and agree to be tobacco free. Have a glass of ice water or soda by the bedside to enjoy. Your plan:

Reward or taking a break - Reward yourself with something you enjoy doing. Try something new, like a crossword puzzle or other game. Your break can be taking a walk to get fresh air.

Other - Any other situations that could make you want to use tobacco.

Resources to help you quit
(800) QUIT NOW (784-8669)
Gundersen Health System tobacco cessation programs
(800) 362-9567 ext 55442
email: wellness@gundersenhealth.org
gundersenhealth.org/wellness
Wisconsin Tobacco Control
tobwis.org
UW-Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention
ctri.wisc.edu
USPHS Guideline and materials
Surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco
Smokefree.gov

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