

Quit Smoking in the New Year with Help from Rutgers

Rutgers Expert Gives a ‘Top Ten Things to Know When Quitting Smoking’ List

Are you trying to quit smoking in the New Year? According to The Tobacco Dependence Program (TDP) at Rutgers University, most people who smoke regret having started and want to stop. Quitting smoking dramatically lowers the risk of illness and premature death, and often results in immediate improvements in health. However, quitting can be hard to do.

TDP outlines the top ten things smokers and their families should know when going through the quitting smoking process--right in time for New Year’s resolutions. Michael Steinberg, MD, MPH, professor of medicine at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and director of the program run jointly by the medical school, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey and Rutgers School of Public Health, recommends the strategies based on extensive research in tobacco dependence and smoking cessation. The list, with a corresponding video, is designed for smokers and those supporting them, and provides real-world guidance on how best to achieve success in quitting smoking.

The program is dedicated to reducing the harm to health caused by tobacco use, and aims to provide expertise on quitting smoking through education, treatment, research and advocacy. Tobacco causes more premature deaths than AIDS, homicide, road traffic crashes, suicide, alcohol, and illegal drugs combined—480,000 each year in the United States.

The “top ten things” list can give smokers and their loved ones manageable steps and strategies to keep their New Year’s resolution and quit smoking in 2018. As outlined by Dr. Steinberg, who is also a member of Rutgers Cancer Institute, below are the top ten things to know while going through the quitting process:

10. Determine the why

Ask yourself why are you trying to quit and continue to remind yourself what is important to you about quitting.

9. Prepare yourself

Consider a safe environment and spend time in smoke-free settings. Clean out your car and home, and remove tobacco products from your surroundings.

8. Set a quit date

Don’t put it off, this is a key for success.

7. Seek out help

There are many resources to be successful quitting smoking and you are not on your own.

6. Plan a healthy lifestyle

Eating right, staying active and getting enough sleep are components to a successful quit.

5. Develop alternate coping skills

Cigarettes are ways to deal with stress. You can develop other strategies to cope.

4. Watch out for caffeine

Smoking can affect the metabolism of other chemicals. Consider reducing your intake of caffeine when quitting smoking or you might feel jittery or anxious.

3. Know your triggers

Make a list of your triggers and cues and try to avoid them. Develop alternative behaviors and stay away from difficult situations as best as you can.

2. Take a comprehensive approach.

Quitting cold turkey has low success rates. By using medications that deal with cravings, counseling that helps with behavior change and good social support, you can dramatically improve success rates

1. Don't give up.

The key is not to give up trying to reach your personal success.

View Dr. Steinberg explaining the list in a video [here](#).

About Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

As one of the nation's leading comprehensive medical schools, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in education, research, health care delivery, and the promotion of community health. Part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School encompasses 20 basic science and clinical departments, and hosts centers and institutes including The Cardiovascular Institute, the Child Health Institute of New Jersey, and the Women's Health Institute. The medical school has been recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as among the top 100 medical schools in the nation for research and primary care.

Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, an RWJBarnabas Health facility and the medical school's principal affiliate, comprise one of the nation's premier academic medical centers. Clinical services are provided by more than 500 faculty physicians in 200+ specialties and subspecialties as part of Rutgers Health, the clinical arm of Rutgers University. Rutgers Health is the most comprehensive academic health care provider in New Jersey, offering a breadth of accessible clinical care throughout the state supported by the latest in medical research and education.

Robert Wood Johnson Medical School maintains educational programs at the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels on its campuses in New Brunswick and Piscataway and provides continuing education courses for health care professionals and community education programs.

With more than 5,500 alumni since the start of its first class in 1996, the medical school has expanded its comprehensive programming and educational opportunities and is at the forefront of innovative curriculum development and a visionary admissions program. To learn more about Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, visit rwjms.rutgers.edu.