

“WILL MY WEIGHT CHANGE WHEN I QUIT SMOKING?”

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health. It is natural to experience challenges when quitting, like weight gain, cravings and higher stress levels. Eating healthy and being active can make it easier to manage cravings and help you focus on quitting and staying smoke-free.

Start with small changes and plan ahead — even before your quit date. Set realistic goals you can maintain for life.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS:



Eat healthy

- **Eat frequent small meals and snacks.** Eating every three to four hours helps to reduce irritability and curb overeating
- **Eat slowly and enjoy the flavour of food.** Eat when you are hungry and stop when you feel satisfied. Enjoy your food. Sit down and take time to enjoy each bite
- **Include lots of fruits and vegetables.** Aim for at least seven servings a day
- **Cook at home more often.** Prepare food with little added fat, sugar, or salt
- **Large portion sizes can lead to overeating.** Visit Canada’s food guides at canada.ca to learn more about recommended number of servings
- **Keep a food and activity journal.** You will be more likely to practice healthy habits if you write them down. Try the eaTracker app at eatracker.ca
- **Plan ahead.** Pack a healthy lunch and snacks so you are not tempted by takeout and unhealthy choices
- **Make water your drink of choice.** Limit how often you drink sugary beverages such as pop, iced tea, juice, flavoured waters and alcohol

PUBLIC HEALTH

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**York Region**



Be more physically active

- **Move more!** Get off the bus a stop early, park farther away from your destination, take the stairs whenever possible and take a walk during breaks
- **Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity a week.** Activity can be done in 10 minute stretches or more throughout the day. Any physical activity is better than none
- **Try brisk walking, swimming, dancing or biking.** Get in touch with nature and spend time being active in a variety of settings, including outdoors
- **Do things you enjoy.** You're more likely to want to be active if you're having fun. Get others involved like friends, family and even your kids whenever possible



Manage cravings

Quitting may slow metabolism back to its usual rate; food starts to taste better and you may find yourself having cravings for sweets or less healthy foods; food can also be a way to manage nicotine cravings and stress; and nicotine cravings can often be confused for hunger.

- When you get a craving for a cigarette, **refer to the four Ds:**
 - » **Delay** for five minutes until the craving passes
 - » **Deep** breathe – close your eyes and breathe in and out slowly
 - » **Distract** yourself – remind yourself why you want to quit, call a friend, do a puzzle, go for a walk
 - » **Drink** water
- Be aware of what triggers your nicotine and food cravings and plan for healthy ways to manage them
- When a craving hits, keep your mouth busy. **Keep a reusable water bottle nearby or try the following healthy snacks:**
 - » Raw vegetables
 - » Low salt pretzels
 - » Fresh fruit
 - » Nuts
 - » Plain popcorn
 - » Sugar-free gum
- If you're having a food craving, it's okay to treat yourself. Keep less healthy foods out of your home. If you really want a food you're craving, buy a small portion at a store (e.g., one scoop of ice cream or a small bag of chips)

