

Quitting Smoking and Your Weight

The effect of smoking on weight is complicated. When people quit smoking they may gain weight, lose weight or stay the same weight.

The health benefits of quitting smoking far outweigh any risks connected to weight gain.

Did You Know?

Smoking can:	Quitting smoking can:
• Decrease appetite	• Result in improved ability to process sugar
• Decrease your body's ability to manage your blood sugar	• Decrease risk of developing diabetes and heart disease
• Affect taste	• Improve taste
• Make it harder for your body to absorb different vitamins and minerals	• Make it easier for your body to absorb different vitamins and minerals

How we eat can actually help us manage withdrawal from quitting smoking

- Eating can reduce cravings to smoke.
- Plan to eat meals at roughly the same time every day (e.g., breakfast, lunch and supper).
- Take the time to sit down and eat. Notice your hunger and fullness cues.
- Stay hydrated. Choose water more often.
- If you get hungry between meals, have a plan for a snack to help you get through to the next meal. If you notice you're wanting to eat a lot later in the evening, you may not have eaten enough earlier in the day.
- Choose a variety of foods that you enjoy and make you feel good.

You may notice food tastes better or you have increased desire to eat

- Changes in taste can increase your enjoyment in eating and desire to eat, especially if you previously used smoking to decrease your appetite.
- Smoking can decrease our ability to use sugar for energy. Because of this, you may crave more sweet foods and carbohydrates. This is usually temporary and will decrease over time.
- You may also notice that caffeine affects you more. For example, if you continue drinking the same amount of coffee after you quit smoking, as before you quit, you may feel jittery or unwell. Reducing caffeine may help you manage these symptoms.

Resources

Ontario residents can speak with a dietitian for free through Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 or TTY: 1-866-797-0007 (press 2 to be directed to a dietitian).

Online nutrition information is also available through UnlockFood.ca and Canada.ca/foodguide

If you feel you are struggling with disordered eating or an eating disorder, connect with a mental health professional.