

Helping Support Someone to Quit Smoking

A recent study by the Centers for Disease Control found that three out of four U.S. homes forbid smoking inside the house. Additionally, restaurants, bars and most public places are now smoke-free. The cost of cigarettes continues to rise to unbelievable heights. Considering all of these barriers, many people want to quit smoking, but as we all know, it's a very difficult addiction to break.

Do you have a friend or family member who is trying to stop smoking? You can help them accomplish this important and healthy goal, with just a few easy and supportive steps.

1. Don't criticize them for smoking. Be a caring friend rather than a judgmental one.
2. It's a smoker's decision to quit – not yours. Do not try and force someone to quit, or make ultimatums. They never work, and only breed resentment.
3. Ask your friend if they need any help. You can provide support, be someone they can call or talk to. If they're not ready today, let them know you'll be there for them when they are ready.
4. Be patient with their moods. Quitting smoking is very, very hard and it can have a profound effect on someone's attitude. Don't take things too personally.
5. Encourage your friend. Remember small steps are better than no steps. If your friend has smoked one less cigarette today, that's progress!
6. Find some activities that do not involve smoking. Go to a park, restaurant, a movie, or to another friend's house who does not smoke. Avoid triggers like drinking or other activities associated with smoking.
7. If your friend has a relapse, remind them of the great job they did before they started smoking again. If they can do it once – they can do it again! Relapse is normal and not something the quitter should beat themselves up about.
8. Keep on supporting your friend. Quitting smoking is one of the hardest things a person can do. Set up anniversaries – one week, month or year as a smoke-free person and celebrate!
9. Let your friend know how proud you are of them, and how much it means to you that they're making an effort to be healthier.
10. If you smoke and want to help someone quit, do not smoke around your friend. Put your cigarettes away to remove temptation.

Quitting smoking is hard, and many people rely on family and friends to help them get through the worst parts of withdrawal. It only lasts a few days, and is a small price to pay for a lifetime of better health, and a fatter wallet!

For additional help, resources and support for people who want to quit smoking, call the New York State Smoker's Quitline at 1-866-697-8487. If you're pregnant and would like to stop smoking, apply to the Baby & Me – Tobacco Free Program through REACH CNY. Call 315-424-0009 for information.

REACH CNY (formerly the Family Ties Network, Inc.,) works to ensure access and support for the full range of quality, culturally-sensitive health and human services; to reduce teen pregnancies; and promote the health and well-being of individuals and families; through education and advocacy.

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