

# Being Around Smokers

## How to Quit When You Live with a Smoker

You can quit smoking even if you live with someone who smokes. The keys to success are respecting one another and working together.

### **The wrong approach:**

Don't make angry demands of your spouse or housemate or set up impossible rules. He or she will probably not follow these and may resent you and undermine your efforts to quit.

### **A better approach:**

Show that you are willing to respect the other person's need to smoke and expect him or her to respect your desire to quit.

## Working Together

The following suggestions can help you show respect for the needs and feelings of the smoker in your house, while giving you the best possible environment in which to quit.



- Ask the smoker not to smoke in front of you or to offer you a cigarette.
- Discuss the possibility that he or she might like to quit with you—but do not force the issue.
- Limit smoking to outside or to one or two rooms in the house.
- Give the smoker one ashtray. Ask him or her to keep this ashtray clean and out of your sight.
- Have your spouse or housemate keep his or her cigarettes where you will not be able to find them.
- Offer to do something special in exchange for this cooperation.
- Agree to openly discuss any problems you may have as you stop smoking. Your smoking friend just may be able to help you find a solution.

## **When Others Smoke**

Family members and good friends who smoke are likely to support you, at least to some extent, in your efforts to quit. But strangers, coworkers, and people you don't know as well may present a bigger challenge. If these people continue to smoke around you, you will need to practice coping techniques to allow you to handle these situations.

### **What can you do if people around you are smoking?**

- Remind yourself of the reasons that you quit.
- Feel sorry for people who still smoke. They are “slaves to their cigarettes.”
- Say to yourself, “I’m proud that I quit,” or “I am in control.”
- Politely tell the smokers that you have recently quit and that it would help you if they did not smoke around you.
- Distract yourself. Always have something to do or to read in case you get into a situation where you are around smokers.
- Leave the scene if you need to.

### **What can you do if someone offers you a cigarette without realizing that you have quit?**

- Be ready to say, “No thank you. I don’t smoke anymore.” Practice saying this in front of a mirror until the words come out easily. Practicing will make it easier to do when the situation actually comes up.
- Do not use the offer of a cigarette as an excuse to smoke.
- Avoid places where you know people are smoking.

### **What you can do if someone starts to tease you or deliberately tempt you by waving cigarettes in front of you or blowing smoke in your face?**

- Politely explain to the person that you are trying to quit, and ask them to stop.
- Avoid giving in to these games. Remember that most people who would do this sort of thing are just jealous that you have been able to quit. If you smoke, they win.
- Say to yourself, “I am strong enough to get through this.”
- Leave the scene as soon as possible.
- Think about the people you know. Avoid anyone who you think might do this.