

What's the alternative?

EACH WEEK, OUR TEAM OF ALTERNATIVE HEALTH EXPERTS ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

I keep trying to quit smoking, but I always take it up again. What can I do to quit for good?

Clinical hypnotherapist Rhondalynn Korolak says: Before you begin, it's important to understand why you want to quit. Quitting for your spouse or children is not enough; you have to want to do it for yourself or you'll keep relapsing. It's essential to your success that you have a compelling reason.

To quit smoking, it takes time to retrain the brain. The mind does not know the difference between real or imagined behaviour, so start referring to yourself as a "non-smoker". I never refer to the process as "quitting smoking". Everything is framed in the positive: becoming a non-smoker. These semantics in language are essential, because of the way the mind works to process information and learn.

Smoking is a habit. Even though nicotine leaves the bloodstream within about two hours of quitting, it will take up to 21 days for the mind to stop building new neuro-connections that initiate the old behaviour. To firmly establish the new habit of being a non-smoker, it's helpful (especially in the beginning) not to put yourself in situations where you are around others who are smoking. Find something you can do with your hands to replace holding a cigarette: use a pencil, toothpicks or dental floss; carry a small vial of peppermint; or

send a text message – anything that takes your mind off that old habit and preoccupies your hands.

Educate yourself on the harmful effects of smoking and understand that the withdrawal symptoms are not a bad thing; in fact, they are a sign the body is repairing itself and recovering (after 10 years, the risk of death from all causes, including lung cancer, will fall to nearly that of a person who has never smoked). This is important.

Many people dread withdrawal. This needs to be reframed so that you begin to see it as a sign that your body is already recovering and becoming healthy again.

Consult your GP for support and start taking a vitamin C supplement – within days you will begin to cough up accumulated phlegm. This is a sign the cilia (the lung's natural cleaning organisms) are beginning to recover, and vitamin C will assist in this process.

Email your What's The Alternative? questions to sundaylifemail@fairfaxmedia.com.au.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS ARE NOT A BAD THING; THEY ARE A SIGN THE BODY IS REPAIRING ITSELF AND RECOVERING.

Photography by Getty Images

My day on a plate

GARY MEHIGAN
MasterChef
Australia judge,
on Network Ten

Breakfast: Home-made granola with nuts, flax seed, pumpkin seeds, oats and a little honey – I add dried fruits, dates, figs or currants for extra sweetness. Plus Greek yoghurt with fresh papaya, and a cup of ginger tea, because I have to wean myself off too many coffees.

Nutritionist Dr Joanna McMillan Price says:

Oh dear, the hazards of being a food judge. The day starts pretty well – I love his home-made

MICHELLE BRIDGES
BIGGEST LOSER TRAINER



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