

# Wellness by the Month

## The American Cancer Society's 4 Steps to a Smoke-free Future

### 1. Make the decision to quit.

- Tell your family and friends. Find a support group whether it's through a group class, Nicotine Anonymous, or a friend or family member who has successfully quit and is willing to help you.
- Throw away your cigarettes and ashtrays.
- Stock up on oral substitutes such as gum, lollipops, and crunchy veggies.
- Make a plan such as using nicotine replacement therapy. To assess your "need for nicotine," take our [online quiz](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_10_13x_Smoking_Habits_Quiz.asp).
- Practice saying, "No, thank you. I'm not a smoker."
- If you've tried to quit but haven't succeeded, understand what did and did not work for you.

### 2. Pick a quit date (How about the third Thursday in November?). On that day:

- Do not smoke at all.
- Keep active.
- Drink lots of water.
- Begin using nicotine replacement if that is your choice.

### 3. Manage withdrawal.

- Avoid people and places where you are tempted to smoke. You need to break mental associations with smoking, so change your routine.
- Get active. Exercise will reduce your stress and keep you busy.
- Practice deep breathing and picture your lungs filling with fresh, clean air.
- Whenever you have the urge to smoke, wait at least 10 minutes; the urge most likely will subside.

### 4. Remain a quitter (of smoking, that is).

- Remember why you wanted to quit in the first place—for your health, family, ability to get around, your wallet, etc.
- Remember there is no such thing as just one cigarette—or even one puff.
- Learn to enjoy new healthy habits.

Sources:

[http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/PED\\_10\\_4\\_Great\\_American\\_Smokeout.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/PED_10_4_Great_American_Smokeout.asp)