

Stop Smoking Recovery Timetable

[Watch a short video on how to quit smoking](#)

WARNING: This recovery benefits timetable reflects averages and norms. While most of the listed health risk reversal conditions presented are common to all stop smoking methods, the below **chart is intended for cold turkey quitters only**, not those using quitting products such as NRT, Chantix, Champix or Zyban, which may produce their own symptoms, delay withdrawal or otherwise inhibit restoration of the natural sensitivity or number of dopamine pathway nicotinic-type (a4b2) receptors (a process known as down-regulation).

Do not rely upon this recovery timetable as it relates to any behavioral change or symptom if using any quit smoking product. Regardless of quitting method, if you or a family member become concerned about any symptom, or any change in thinking, mood or behavior, contact your physician or pharmacist **IMMEDIATELY!**

Our body's ability to mend is beauty to behold!

Within ...

20 minutes	Your blood pressure, pulse rate and the temperature of your hands and feet have returned to normal.
8 hours	Remaining nicotine in your bloodstream has fallen to 6.25% of normal peak daily levels, a 93.75% reduction.
12 hours	Your blood oxygen level has increased to normal. Carbon monoxide levels have dropped to normal.
24 hours	Anxieties have peaked in intensity and within two weeks should return to near pre-cessation levels.
48 hours	Damaged nerve endings have started to regrow and your sense of smell and taste are beginning to return to normal. Cessation anger and irritability will have peaked.
72 hours	Your entire body will test 100% nicotine-free and over 90% of all nicotine

metabolites (the chemicals it breaks down into) will now have passed from your body via your urine. [Symptoms](#) of chemical withdrawal have peaked in intensity, including restlessness. The number of cue induced crave episodes experienced during any quitting day have peaked for the "average" ex-user. Lung bronchial tubes leading to air sacs (alveoli) are beginning to relax in recovering smokers. Breathing is becoming easier and your lung's functional abilities are starting to increase.

- 5 - 8 days** The "average" ex-smoker will encounter an "average" of [three cue induced crave episodes per day](#). Although we may not be "average" and although serious cessation time distortion can make minutes feel like hours, it is unlikely that any single episode will last longer than 3 minutes. Keep a clock handy and time them.
- 10 days** 10 days - The "average" ex-user is down to encountering [less than two crave episodes per day](#), each less than 3 minutes.
- 10 days to 2 weeks** Recovery has likely progressed to the point where your [addiction](#) is no longer doing the talking. Blood circulation in your gums and teeth are now similar to that of a non-user.
- 2 to 4 weeks** Cessation related anger, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, impatience, insomnia, restlessness and depression [have ended](#). If still experiencing any of these symptoms get seen and evaluated by your physician.
- 2 weeks to 3 months** Your [heart attack risk](#) has started to drop. Your [lung function](#) is beginning to improve.
- 21 days** The number of acetylcholine receptors, which were [up-regulated](#) in response to nicotine's presence in the frontal, parietal, temporal, occipital, basal ganglia, thalamus, brain stem, and cerebellum regions of the brain, have now substantially down-regulated, and receptor binding has returned to levels seen in the brains of non-smokers ([2007 study](#)).
- 3 weeks to 3 months** Your [circulation](#) has substantially improved. Walking has become easier. Your chronic cough, if any, has likely disappeared. If not, get seen by a doctor, and sooner if at all concerned, as a chronic cough can be a sign of lung cancer.
- 4 weeks** Plasma suPAR is a stable inflammatory biomarker predictive of development of diseases ranging from diabetes to cancer in smokers. A [2016 study](#) found that within 4 weeks of quitting smoking, with or without NRT, that suPAR levels in 48 former smokers had fallen from a baseline smoking median of 3.2 ng/ml to levels "no longer significantly different from the never smokers' values" (1.9 ng/ml)
- 8 weeks** Insulin resistance in smokers has normalized despite average weight gain of 2.7 kg ([2010 SGR, page 384](#)).
- 1 to 9 months** Any smoking related sinus congestion, fatigue or shortness of breath has decreased. [Cilia have regrown](#) in your lungs, thereby increasing their ability to handle mucus, keep your lungs clean and reduce infections. Your body's overall energy has increased.
- 1 year** Your excess risk of [coronary heart disease, heart attack and stroke](#) has dropped to less than half that of a smoker.

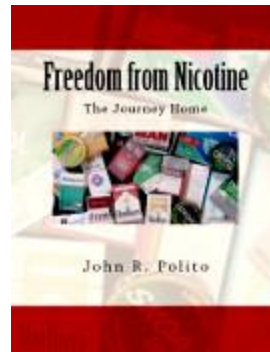
5 years	Your risk of a subarachnoid hemorrhage has declined to 59% of your risk while still smoking (2012 study). If a female ex-smoker, your risk of developing diabetes is now that of a non-smoker (2001 study).
5 to 15 years	Your risk of stroke has declined to that of a non-smoker.
10 years	Your risk of being diagnosed with lung cancer is between 30% and 50% of that for a continuing smoker (2005 study). Risk of death from lung cancer has declined by almost half if you were an average smoker (one pack per day). Risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus and pancreas have declined. Risk of developing diabetes for both men and women is now similar to that of a never-smoker (2001 study).
13 years	The average smoker who is able to live to age 75 has 5.8 fewer teeth than a non-smoker (1998 study). But by year 13 after quitting, your risk of smoking induced tooth loss has declined to that of a never-smoker (2006 study).
15 years	Your risk of coronary heart disease is now that of a person who has never smoked. Your risk of pancreatic cancer has declined to that of a never-smoker (2011 study - but note 2nd pancreatic study making identical finding at 20 years).
20 years	Female excess risk of death from all smoking related causes, including lung disease and cancer, has now reduced to that of a never-smoker (2008 study). Risk of pancreatic cancer has declined to that of a never-smoker (2011 study).

... so long as we stop our self-destruction in time!



Primary sources for this recovery benefits timetable are: (1) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General](#), 2004; (2) Hughes, JR, [Effects of abstinence from tobacco: valid symptoms and time course](#), Nicotine and Tobacco Research, March 2007, Volume 9(3), Pages 315-327; (3) O'Connell KA, et al, [Coping in real time: using Ecological Momentary Assessment techniques to assess coping with the urge to smoke](#), Research in Nursing and Health, December 1998, Volume 21(6), Pages 487-497; and (4) Mamede M, et al, [Temporal change in human nicotinic acetylcholine receptor after smoking cessation: 5IA SPECT study](#), Journal of Nuclear Medicine, November 2007, Volume 48(11), Pages 1829-1835.

Have you read WhyQuit's free quitting e-books?



Knowledge destroys quitting anxieties



Learn More About Smart Turkey Quitting

- **WhyQuit.com** - WhyQuit is the Internet's oldest forum devoted to the art, science and psychology of cold turkey quitting, the stop smoking method used by the vast majority of all successful long-term ex-smokers. Left to right, WhyQuit is organized under three headings: (1) Motivation, (2) Education and (3) Support.
- **"Never Take Another Puff"** - Imagine a free 149 page stop smoking ebook that's registered more than 4 million downloads and was written by a man who has devoted 40 years, full-time to helping smokers quit. Never Take Another Puff (NTAP) was authored by Joel Spitzer, the Internet's leading authority on how to stop smoking cold turkey. It is an insightful collection of almost 100 articles on every cessation topic imaginable.
- **"Freedom from Nicotine - The Journey Home"** - Written by John R. Polito, a former 30-year heavy smoker and WhyQuit's 1999 founder, Freedom from Nicotine (FFN) is a free nicotine dependency recovery book that documents the science underlying nicotine dependency and successful cessation.



- [Turkeyville](#) - Visit Turkeyville, Facebook's most popular quit smoking support group. The group's primary focus is the first few days and helping new quitters get started. Yes you can!
- [Joel's Library](#) - Joel's Library is home to Joel Spitzer's "Daily Quitting Lesson Guide." The Guide walks new quitters through the first two weeks of smoking cessation, recommending daily videos to watch and articles to read. Joel's Library is also home to more than 100 original short stop smoking articles, to his free ebook Never Take Another Puff, and to his collection of more than 300 video stop smoking lessons.
- [Nicotine Addiction 101](#) - WhyQuit's guide to understanding nicotine dependency.
- [Freedom](#) - Looking for a deadly serious and highly focused education oriented support group? Home to Joel Spitzer, Freedom is the Internet's only 100% nicotine-free peer message board support forum. Explore Freedom's hundreds of thousands of archived member posts on how to quit smoking.
- [Nicotine Cessation Topic Index](#) - An alphabetical subject matter index to hundreds of nicotine cessation support group discussions, article and videos.
- [40 Quitting Tips](#) - Key cold turkey nicotine cessation tips on how to stop smoking, vaping, chewing or sucking nicotine into your body and bloodstream.



Knowledge is a Quitting Method!



<u>WhyQuit</u>	<u>Law of Addiction</u>	<u>Joel's Library</u>
<u>Freedom</u>	<u>Turkeyville</u>	<u>How to Quit</u>