



FOREVER
*FREE*TM

A Guide
To Remaining
Smoke Free



Smoking
Urges

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This is the second booklet in the Forever Free series. The first booklet was an overview of important information about staying off of cigarettes. This booklet covers smoking urges in more detail.

What are Urges?

Urges. Cravings. Desires. These are all words that smokers and ex-smokers use to describe how they feel when they want a cigarette. To some people, each word means something a little bit different. For example, some smokers say that a “craving” is much stronger than an “urge.” However, to most people, the words mean pretty much the same thing. In this booklet, we will use all three words to mean the same thing.

Different Types of Urges

There are at least three kinds of cigarette urges that ex-smokers have:

1. nicotine withdrawal urges
2. habit urges
3. memories of smoking

1. Nicotine Withdrawal Urges

Over your years of smoking, your body adjusted to the nicotine. Many of your organs made changes to get used to the effects of nicotine. These include your brain and your heart. These changes let you smoke without feeling all the effects of nicotine that you felt when you first started smoking. For example, after years of smoking you probably did not feel lightheaded after a cigarette. Your pulse no longer raced as fast.

But, when you quit smoking your body adjusted again. This time it had to adjust to **not** getting nicotine. Your brain, heart, and other organs now had to get used to you not smoking! This change can be unpleasant and is called nicotine withdrawal. The symptoms of nicotine withdrawal include:

- lightheadedness
- sleep problems
- decreased heart rate
- craving for cigarettes
- increased appetite
- difficulty thinking
- headache
- nausea (sick to your stomach)
- depression (feeling sad)
- irritability
- anxiety (feeling tense)
- constipation