



FOREVER
*FREE*TM

A Guide
To Remaining
Smoke Free



What If
You Have A
Cigarette?

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This is the fourth booklet in the Forever Free series. This booklet covers the effects of a "slip"– having a cigarette after you have quit. Although this is a short booklet, the topic is very important. Ex-smokers who start smoking again always start with a single cigarette. That first cigarette is an important one.

Can't I Have Just One Cigarette?

The answer to this question is "No!!" Sometimes ex-smokers try to tell themselves that they will be able to smoke only one cigarette without a problem. There are times when it can be very tempting to think of smoking "just one." For example: when you are under a lot of stress, when you are having a strong urge, when you are with smokers, or when you are in any high-risk situation.

"Nine out of ten ex-smokers who have a cigarette after quitting later return to regular smoking."

The vast majority of ex-smokers can not have "just one." Research shows that if you have even **one** cigarette after quitting, there is a 90% chance that you will return to regular smoking!! That's right—for every 10 ex-smokers who have a cigarette after quitting, 9 end up returning to regular smoking. It does not happen right away, but one cigarette can lead to another, and another. You may have heard that a recovering alcoholic should never drink alcohol. It is even more important for ex-smokers to avoid smoking than it is for alcoholics to avoid drinking alcohol! This is because nicotine is much more addicting than alcohol. Therefore, you must do everything you can to avoid having that first cigarette. When you are tempted to smoke, remember to use the behavioral and mental coping skills that are listed in Booklet 2, "Smoking Urges."

"You must do everything you can to avoid that first cigarette."