



FOREVER
*FREE*TM

A Guide
To Remaining
Smoke Free



Life Without
Cigarettes

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This is the eighth and last booklet in the Forever Quit series. This booklet covers life without cigarettes and how to keep it that way!! It also reviews some of the key points from the past booklets.

Quitting smoking is the most important thing you can do for your health. You should be very proud of yourself, whether you have now quit for 3 months or 15 years!

There are a number of things that you should keep in mind as you continue your goal to live a smoke-free life. Although your odds for remaining smoke-free add up as each day passes, relapse can still occur if you are not careful.

We hope that this information will help to prevent relapse and keep you living a healthy smoke-free life. But first of all, we want to congratulate you!! By now we hope you see how good life without cigarettes can be for you and for those around you.

Urges

If you have not smoked for a while, you are in what is called the “maintenance stage” of quitting. By this time you may find that you rarely think about smoking. The thought of ever smoking again may even make you sick. On the other hand, you may still have some cravings or thoughts of smoking.

If you do have an urge to smoke, there are some things to keep in mind. As we discussed in Booklet 2, *Smoking Urges*, research has shown that people who use coping skills are much less likely to go back to smoking than people who do not use coping skills.

Review:

There are two types of coping skills you can use when you have an urge to smoke: **behavioral and mental**.

Behavioral coping skills are things that you can **do** to reduce the urge to smoke. These include leaving the situation, taking a deep breath, or reading a book.

Mental coping skills are things that you can **tell yourself** to reduce the urge to smoke. These include, “I feel better,” or “smoking is not an option.”

Thinking ahead about situations that may cause urges is an important part of preparing for them. If you have not smoked in a while, you have probably broken the links between smoking and most of your daily activities. They should no longer trigger urges to smoke.

But, you might want to be careful during events that used to involve smoking, even if they have occurred less often since quitting. If you have urges or thoughts of smoking, tell yourself that the **event** is causing the urge. Each time you have that event without smoking, you greatly reduce the chance of having an urge in the future.

Some events linked with smoking might be:

- Vacations.
- Weddings.
- Holidays or family parties.