



British Heart  
Foundation

# 10 MINUTES TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE Time to quit



**FIGHT  
FOR EVERY  
HEARTBEAT**

[bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk)

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**Smoking can do serious damage to your body, but it's never too late to quit.**

**If you do, you'll be much less likely to develop coronary heart disease and cancer.**

**You're in control – by taking ten minutes to make a plan to quit, you could change your life.**

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## **Why should I worry about coronary heart disease?**

Your heart is a muscle that needs **oxygen** from your blood to work properly.

**Coronary heart disease** is when the tubes that supply your heart muscle with blood (your **coronary arteries**) get clogged up.

If the tubes get narrower, less oxygen will get to your heart and you might get chest pain or **angina**.

If a tube gets blocked and the blood can't get to part of your heart, you'll have a **heart attack**.

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## Time to quit?

Tobacco smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals including tar and **nicotine**. Every time you smoke, they go straight into your body through your lungs.

The chemicals in tobacco smoke can damage the lining of your **coronary arteries** – the tubes that take oxygen-rich blood to your heart. This can cause fatty material to build up in your arteries, leading them to get clogged up and blocked.

The chemicals in tobacco smoke also make **platelets** in your blood more sticky, which can cause your blood to form clots which can block your arteries and cause a heart attack or stroke.

All this means that you're much more likely to develop **coronary heart disease**, and as a smoker, you're almost twice as likely to have a heart attack than your non-smoking friends.



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## Time to change?

If you're thinking about quitting, it's important that you're ready to make the change. Fill in this page to help you decide if you're ready.

I started smoking because:

*e.g. I wanted to be accepted, I liked the taste.*

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I smoke now because:

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I want to quit because:

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I spend £ \_\_\_\_\_ a week on cigarettes.

This is £ \_\_\_\_ a year (times the amount by 52).

If I gave up I could use this money on:

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How I will feel when I stop:

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Do you feel ready to quit?      Yes  No



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## Time dragging?

Finding the right support makes a difference. Research shows that getting professional help doubles your chance of quitting.

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## What can I do?

### Talk to your doctor or pharmacist

You can find help at your local doctor's surgery or chemist.

### Find an NHS Stop Smoking Service

You can get free face-to-face support to quit smoking free from the NHS. Call 0800 434 6677 or go to [www.smokefree.nhs.uk](http://www.smokefree.nhs.uk) to find a service nearby.

### Get support online

The [www.nosmokingday.org.uk](http://www.nosmokingday.org.uk) website provides information and support for quitters. It has an online community which gives you the chance to get support from other people who are quitting.

I'm really worried about my health.

There are lots of ways we can help.

I really want to quit, can you help?

You don't have to tackle this on your own.

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## Time to prepare

There are lots of different ways to stop smoking. Some people cut down gradually. Other people stop straight away. Some people use medication, some use **nicotine replacement therapy** and others rely on willpower.

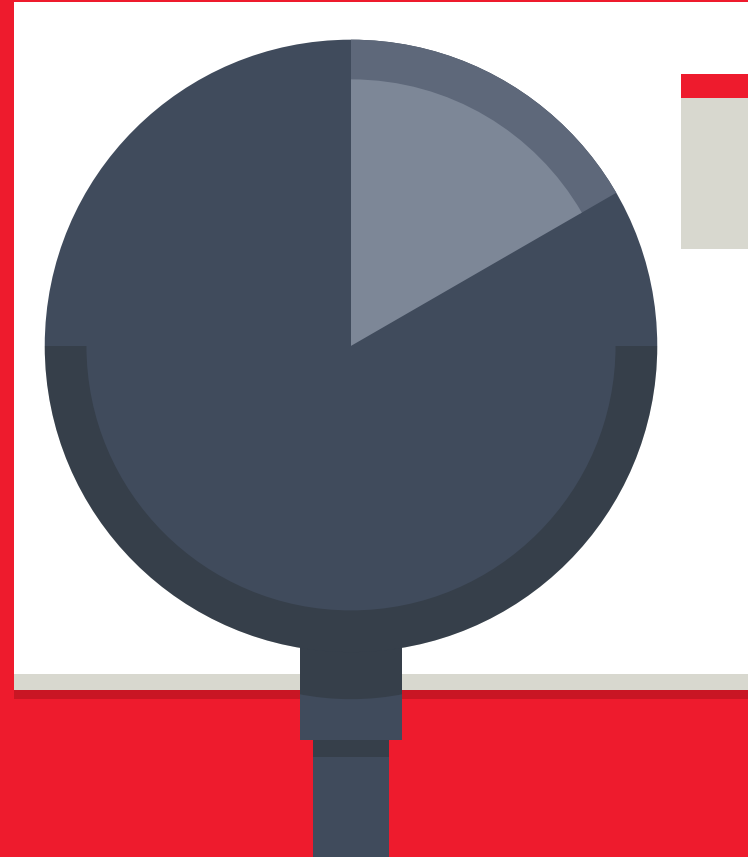
Talk to your GP, pharmacist or stop smoking advisor for more information.

Method	Pros	Cons
<b>Nicotine Replacement therapy (NRT) such as gum, sprays, lozenges or inhalators</b>	Research shows that using NRT can double your chance of quitting. It can satisfy your need for the 'hand to mouth' action of smoking.	NRT can be expensive if it's not on prescription. You have to remember to keep it around.
<b>Medication such as bupropion (Zyban) or varenicline (Champix)</b>	Using medication can reduce your cravings and can double your chance of quitting.	Some people get side effects. You have to remember to take it.
<b>Willpower</b>	After 24 hours you'll be free of chemicals like nicotine. It's totally cost-free.	You're more likely to quit with the help of NRT or medication.
<b>Complementary therapy (acupuncture / hypnotherapy)</b>	Some people say this helps them quit.	We don't know how well they work and they can be expensive

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## What about using electronic cigarettes?

E-cigarettes allow you to breathe in **nicotine** vapour. Unlike tobacco smoke, this nicotine doesn't contain many of the chemicals that cause cancer and heart disease. But scientists don't know yet if e-cigarettes can help you quit or if they cause any long-term damage to your health.



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## Time to get ready

Here are some things you can do in the days before your quit date. Tick them off as you do them.

- Contact a GP, pharmacist or stop smoking advisor for advice on the best quit method for you.
- Talk to an ex-smoker. If they can do it so can you.
- Plan to keep your quit day as stress-free as you can.
- Lots of smokers try and give up a few times before they quit for good. Think about any times you've given up in the past – what did you learn?
- Think about how you will deal with cravings to smoke.

For more ideas, go to [bhf.org.uk/ten](https://www.bhf.org.uk/ten)





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## Richard's success story

"Since leaving school I worked in the pub trade and smoked a lot, and was around other smokers a lot.

I had a heart attack when I was 36. I knew in my heart of hearts that smoking had caused it.

The surgeon pointed out that smoking was one of the major causes of the heart attack and said to give it up straight away.

I have a wife and two children, and the thought of leaving them was too painful. So I quit smoking and haven't looked back.

Quitting smoking is the best thing I have ever done. Alongside a better diet and doing more exercise, I now feel great."

Find out more about how Richard changed his life at [bhf.org.uk/ten](https://www.bhf.org.uk/ten)



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## Next steps

If you'd like to find out more about quitting, download and print an A4 stop smoking tracker, or order the other booklets in this series, go online to [bhf.org.uk/ten](https://www.bhf.org.uk/ten)

To speak to someone about anything heart-related, call our Heart Helpline on 0300 330 3311. Phone lines are open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday at a similar cost to 01 or 02 numbers.

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## Join us in the fight for every heartbeat

For 50 years the British Heart Foundation has been funding life-saving heart research.

From babies with heart problems to the mums, dads and grandparents who survive a heart attack, so many people need our help.

But we need your support to continue the fight against heart disease. Visit [bhf.org.uk](https://www.bhf.org.uk) to make a donation or find out more.



**10 MINUTES TO  
CHANGE YOUR LIFE**  
Your change challenge



British Heart  
Foundation

Coronary heart disease is the UK's single biggest killer.

For over 50 years we've pioneered research that's transformed the lives of people living with heart and circulatory conditions. Our work has been central to the discoveries of vital treatments that are changing the fight against heart disease.

But so many people still need our help.

From babies born with life-threatening heart problems to the many Mums, Dads and Grandparents who survive a heart attack and endure the daily battles of heart failure.

Join our fight for every heartbeat in the UK. Every pound raised, minute of your time and donation to our shops will help make a difference to people's lives.

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Your challenge



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# Time to quit

## Your 10 minute challenge

You're in control – by taking the time to plan and quit, you can help keep your heart healthy – and change your life.

My main reason for quitting is

I am going to tackle my withdrawal symptoms by

I am going to quit on this date

I will respond to the urge to smoke by telling myself

The quit method I have chosen is

I will reward myself for not-smoking by

I am going to get support from

Take ten seconds a day to tick off your smoking-free days as you go. Remember a lapse isn't a collapse and it's always worth continuing.

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30