

exercise to help with your quit

One of the biggest challenges of quitting smoking is managing the cravings that can come with nicotine withdrawal.

Although it may feel like the cravings will last forever, in truth, they usually last between 1-5 minutes, and it helps if you can keep yourself busy and distracted whilst they are happening.

A simple but sometimes overlooked way to manage withdrawal symptoms is physical exercise.

Exercise is known to reduce nicotine withdrawal symptoms, and even short periods of exercise can have immediate effects on cravings. It can also help to manage both the physical and the psychological elements of addiction.

When you are stopping smoking, it will help if you change that habit for something else; exercise is the perfect replacement; it will not only help you manage any withdrawal symptoms but it has been proven to make you feel better and improve your overall health and wellbeing.

exercise can support your quit by:

- **managing stress** - exercise promotes the release of endorphins, the hormones that make you feel good, reducing any feelings of stress or anxiety, improve your mood and feel more energetic
- **distraction** – keeping your body and mind active can distract you from thinking about or wanting cigarettes.
- **helping to reduce cravings** – Moderate exercise can help to reduce the urge to smoke.



- **limiting weight gain and appetite** – some people worry that they will put weight on if they quit. Exercise can help to reduce hunger and burn any extra calories

follow these tips to stay motivated:

- Set aside regular time to exercise, it won't just happen if you don't make time for it.
- Ideally, aim for a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate activity on most days of the week. If you can't do 30 minutes all at once, do 3 x 10 minutes.
- Find something that you enjoy doing, it shouldn't feel like a chore. Start slowly and listen to your body. Walking is a good way to start, and as you become more confident, you can increase to more physical activity such as the gym or swimming.

Smokers often experience shortness of breath with physical activity. Once you have quit, you will notice that it is becoming easier to exercise. That's because your lung function improves when you're not smoking, and your breathing will improve.

Have you ever considered joining a gym but are unsure if you would like it? Brio Leisure can offer you a free 7-day pass to try it out and see what you think.

Call the Brio on 0300 777 0033 to ask about a free 7-day pass.

