

CT QUITLINE

1-800-QUITNOW

www.quitnow.net/connecticut



Stay positive! Tell your friend "Slips happen. Quitting isn't easy but you've got this and I'm here for you".

The CT Quitline is a tobacco use cessation telephone and web service available to all CT residents free of charge. It is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services are available in all languages. The CT Quitline staff are there to help, many are former smokers. They can:

- ✓ Answer questions.
- ✓ Talk about ways to quit.
- ✓ Ask about triggers that make one want to use tobacco.
- ✓ Send a Quit Guide with tips to help.
- ✓ Develop a Quit Plan and talk about medications to help with withdrawal symptoms and if eligible, provide a starter pack of nicotine patches, gum or lozenges.
- ✓ Provide additional support.
- ✓ Make a referral to a nearby cessation program.

FRIEND'S HANDBOOK

Tips to help you help them to quit



Someone important to you has asked you to help them quit smoking, vaping or other tobacco use. Quitting is hard work and your support can play a big role in helping him/her to be successful. As a quit friend, your job is to be understanding, supportive and caring. This handbook is for you. It will provide you with information about quitting and tips on how to help.

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Remember to ask
your friend how
they want you to
help them.



Be patient and positive. Supporting someone who is quitting can be frustrating and exhausting but think of how frustrating and exhausting quitting is for the quitter. Stay upbeat and do not take the quitter's bad moods or frustrations personally.

Help the quitter de-stress. Help them find another way to relax without using tobacco.

If you are an ex-tobacco user, do let them know how quitting has improved your life. Your story can inspire them to stay motivated. Do not push them into quitting the way you did. Everyone is different and each person needs to find their own way and reasons to quit.

If you are a current tobacco user, do not use tobacco in front of them or offer them tobacco. Ask the quitter what they want you to do if they ask you for tobacco. Try to quit with them. Chances for quitting are better when quitting with a friend.

If they slip or relapse, go easy on them. They probably feel guilty already. Do not lecture. Slips and relapses are part of learning how to quit. Encourage them to try again, and let them know you are there to support them.

Be there for the long haul. Cravings can pop up weeks and months after someone has quit. Let them know they always have your support.

Often the first two weeks after quitting are the hardest. Withdrawal symptoms are common but will eventually go away. There are many medications that may help with these symptoms. Encourage your quitter to contact their health care provider or the CT Quitline at **1-800-QUIT NOW** for help getting quit medications.

Your support is important and may be the key to helping someone close to you quit tobacco for good.



Supporting your friend may get hard. You are providing a wonderful gift by helping. Even short quits are successes to learn from.



Understanding Quitting

Quitting is hard and does not happen overnight. In fact, most tobacco users try to quit a number of times before they are finally able to quit for good.

So why is it so hard to quit?

Tobacco users have mixed feelings about quitting.

You will often hear a tobacco user say that they want to quit because it is not good for them but that they really like smoking/using/vaping. Tobacco fills a need that the tobacco user has. Many will call cigarettes or tobacco a "good friend" that has helped them through life.

Tobacco is used to cope with stress and other life pressures.

Tobacco users often think that smoking, vaping and other tobacco use is helping them to get through the pressures of daily life. They often believe that it is the only thing that can help them cope. Quitting takes away this coping strategy.

Using tobacco is part of a normal routine.

Tobacco users/vapers are used to smoking or vaping at the same time each day. It becomes automatic and part of their

daily routine. Quitting disrupts this routine. Some people go back to using tobacco in order to feel normal again.

The nicotine in tobacco is addictive.

When quitting, the body craves the nicotine and goes through withdrawal. This is a normal process but can be uncomfortable and frustrating. Withdrawal symptoms can include trouble sleeping, not being able to concentrate and feeling anxious and restless. They go away on their own, usually within a few weeks.

There are medications that can also help to relieve symptoms.

Many will go back to using tobacco again to get rid of the symptoms.



Tobacco users often have strong feelings of loss when quitting.

The Quitting Process

Quitting happens in small steps over time.

With each try, the tobacco user learns more about what can help them quit for good. The more times a person tries to quit, the more they learn about quitting and the closer they come to being a non-tobacco user.

Slips and Relapses happen.

Even without a strong determination to quit, tobacco users can be successful. Planning for the challenges of quitting and finding a strong reason to quit are the keys to being successful.

Slips (using once or twice but getting right back to quitting) and **Relapses** (using regularly again) are common and a part of learning to quit. Starting to smoke, vape or using other tobacco again may mean that the tobacco user needs to plan more for the challenges of quitting. Slips and relapses can be a learning experience and can help the tobacco user get that much closer to quitting for good.

Learning to live without tobacco.

Most people use tobacco because they are addicted to the nicotine and tobacco has become a part of their daily life. They use tobacco because it is what they do at a certain time or when they are feeling or reacting to certain situations. Many things can trigger the need to use tobacco, such as an argument, finishing a meal, having a drink, driving, or a stressful day. When quitting, the person is relearning how to feel, react and cope to situations without using tobacco even when their body is craving it. Learning to live without tobacco takes practice.

Most people try to quit about 8 times before they succeed.

Tell your friend how proud you are of them for trying and let them know you will support them no matter how long it takes.



Put together a tobacco free survival kit with a few things to help your friend deal with cravings. Include a short message to keep them motivated like "Keep staying strong!"

Celebrate the successes - big and small. Praise and congratulate the quitter on every effort they make towards being tobacco free. Staying tobacco free even for one day is a reason to celebrate.



Tips on Helping

Allow the quitter to be in charge of their quit process. It is their lifestyle change and their challenge, not yours.

Do not assume that you know how to help. Ask the quitter how they want you to support them.

Ask them how they are feeling, doing, not just whether they are staying quit.

Listen to the quitter. Resist the urge to nag, lecture or complain. Do not offer advice unless they ask.

Help them with planning the quit. Think of other things they can do instead of using tobacco. Ask them what has helped them not to use in the past and do those things more often. Provide substitutions to tobacco such as fruits, healthy snacks or non-alcoholic drinks.

Encourage them to contact their health care provider or the CT Quitline for help with quitting.

Provide distractions for them. Go for a walk, play a game, talk, watch a movie, go to a place that is tobacco free. Avoid bars and parties.

Quitters often worry about weight gain. Some quitters will gain weight but the average is usually only 5-10 pounds. Even so, their health will still be better if they quit. Some quitters will crave sweets. Help your friend to stay away from sweets by offering them healthier, low fat alternatives such as fruit, vegetables, plain popcorn, or sugarless gum. Exercise is also a great way to help keep weight down. Exercise together like walking, swimming or yoga.