

How Can I Help a Smoker or Vaper Quit?

Different Stages of Quitting

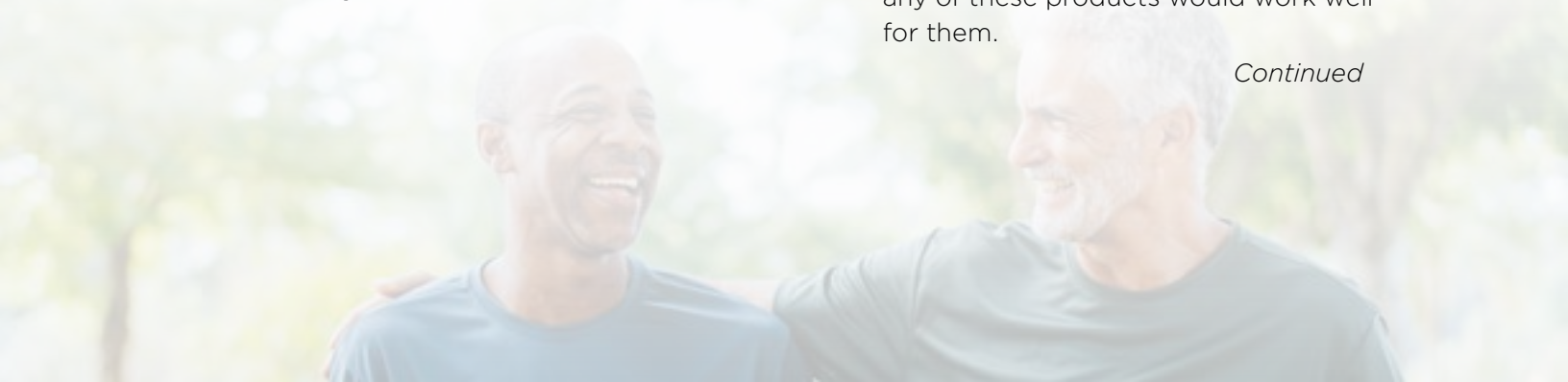
It is common for smokers and vapers to go through different stages before they quit, or while they are quitting. At each stage, the smoker or vaper will need help in a different way. For many smokers or vapers, the stages include:

- **Pre-contemplation:** At this stage, the smoker or vaper does not want to quit. They are probably not open to hearing about the reasons they should stop smoking or vaping.
- **Contemplation:** The smoker or vaper has started to think about quitting but is still unsure. They may start looking at what they can do to stop smoking or vaping.
- **Preparation:** The smoker or vaper is ready to quit in the near future. They have set a goal for how, and when, they will quit.
- **Action:** The smoker or vaper has quit. The hard work has begun. Support from family and friends is critical at this stage.
- **Maintenance:** The smoker or vaper continues to focus on not lighting up, even though he or she may still have the urge to do so. They may slip up along the way. The key is to keep trying.
- **Termination:** The smoker or vaper is now an ex-smoker or ex-vaper. They no longer have a nicotine addiction.

Here are some tips on what to do and what not to do if you want to help a smoker or vaper quit.

- **Do** respect that the smoker or vaper is in charge. This is their decision and their challenge.
- **Don't** nag, judge, or scold your loved one about the dangers of smoking or vaping. This may make him or her less likely to listen to you.
- **Do** ask the smoker or vaper how you can help them in their effort to quit. Listen carefully to what they want. Don't assume you know how to help them.
- **Do** ask the smoker or vaper how often they want you to check in on them.
- **Do** make yourself available. Let the smoker or vaper know it's OK to talk to you any time they need help or encouragement.
- **Do** let the smoker or vaper know you are proud of them for taking this step.
- **Don't** doubt your loved one's ability to quit. Let them know you have faith in them.
- **Do** talk to the smoker or vaper about the benefits of not smoking or vaping. Remind them of these benefits once they have quit.
- **Do** get information about nicotine replacement therapies (NRT) and share this with the smoker or vaper. Ask them to check with their doctor to find out if any of these products would work well for them.

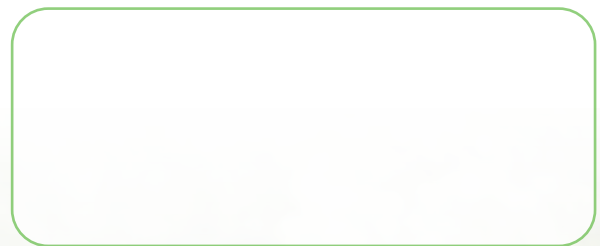
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- **Do** reward the smoker or vaper for each goal they reach. Give them a card, take them out for a meal, buy a bunch of balloons—do something to make them feel special.
- **Do** ensure that the smoker or vaper has goodies on hand to take the place of cigarettes or vape pens. Some great examples are toothpicks, cinnamon sticks, sugar-free gum, mints, and hard candies that they can chew or suck on.
- **Do** point out positive changes to the smoker or vaper. For instance, you can say things like: “You look healthier,” or “Your hair and clothes smell so much better now.”
- **Don’t** be alarmed by bad moods. It is normal for smokers or vapers to be grumpy or anxious in the first few weeks after they have quit.
- **Do** help the smoker or vaper deal with the urge to smoke. If they feel like they want to light up, get them to take a walk, play a card game, listen to music, or anything else that will help get their mind off smoking or vaping. Make a list of activities they may enjoy or that may help them relax ahead of time.
- **Do** help the smoker or vaper with chores to ease the stress of not smoking or vaping.
- **Don’t** make the smoker or vaper feel guilty if they slip (have a drag or a cigarette) or relapse (go back to smoking or vaping). Remind them that setbacks are normal.
- **Do** encourage the smoker or vaper to try again if they have a relapse. Help them to learn how they can succeed with their quit plan the next time.
- **Do** find out about support groups that the smoker or vaper can join in their neighborhood or town.
- **Do** find out about web-based programs that can help the smoker or vaper quit.
- **Do** find out about telephone coaching or counseling that can help the smoker or vaper quit. Share this information with the smoker or vaper.



This information is not intended to take the place of regular medical care or advice. Please check with your doctor before using this information or beginning any self-care program.