

Don't Say: "What are you so touchy about? Quitting's tough, but aren't you overreacting? It's only a dumb habit!"

Check in daily, especially during the first week. Be understanding, not accusing or suspicious.

Do Say: "I know what it must be like. Look how hard it is for me to stay away from fattening food! Let's find some alternatives together."

Don't Say: "Is that cigarette smoke I smell? C'mon, I thought you said you were going to quit this time."

Take a positive rather than a negative approach. Your friend will feel less defensive.

Do Say: "C'mon — millions have kicked the habit. You can too. And I'll see you through it."

Don't Say: "I can't believe you'll ever quit. But okay — I'll help you try one more time."

Reward successes. Don't emphasize failures.

Do Say: "Remember I promised I'd treat you to a movie when you hadn't smoked for a week? Well, let's go!"

Don't Say: "Hey, I thought you really wanted to quit. Now you've ruined your record. Well, I'm not going to say I told you so."

Be aware that quitting smoking can be an emotionally charged time.

Do Say: "I know you're feeling upset right now. Still, I feel hurt by your attacks. Can we talk about this when you're feeling calmer?"

Don't Say: "You've been picking on me since you quit and I can't stand it! You better go back to smoking."

In your effort to understand how tough it is, be careful not to make the assumption that your friend will fail.

Do Say: "I know it's rough sometimes, but if we work together, I'll bet we can find a way to deal with every smoking urge."

Don't Say: "As soon as you smoke a cigarette, give me a call. I'll try to help."

A FINAL WORD

Supporting someone who's trying to quit smoking is not an easy job. Appreciate yourself for the very important role you play in helping your friend become a non-smoker.

For more information about quitting smoking or healthy alternatives, contact your local Kaiser Permanente Health Education Center or Department or visit kp.org/healthyliving.

This pamphlet was adapted by the Northern California Regional Health Education Department of The Permanente Medical Group with permission from the Minnesota Heart Health Program, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor.

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94058 (Revised 04-06)



ADVICE FOR THE FRIEND OF A SMOKER

Understanding the Smoking Habit

As a non-smoker you have the perfect chance to do a good deed for a friend or relative who smokes and wants to quit. Surveys show that many people who quit say the support of a non-smoking friend is one of the most important factors in their success.

Reading this brochure before you offer your support — especially if you have never smoked yourself — can show you how to help most effectively.

- Remember that smoking is not only a habit that has often taken years to develop and has become part of a person's entire lifestyle, but it is also an addiction. So a change like quitting may not be either immediate or easy.
- Keep in mind that we all have habits we wish we didn't have, like biting our nails or eating high-calorie snacks. In other words, you (and everyone else) can probably relate to having an unwanted habit.
- Your support is especially important during the early quitting period, but there can be a right way and a wrong way to help. So if a friend asks you to lend a hand while he/she quits smoking, or if you are thoughtful enough to volunteer your support, remember these do's and don'ts.



The Do's and Don'ts

Ask your friend what kind of help would be valuable.

Do Say: "I'd like to support you quitting smoking. How can I be helpful?"

Help your friend avoid situations where he or she will be tempted to smoke, especially during the first few weeks.

Do Say: "Instead of going to that party tonight where everyone will be smoking, let's go to a movie."

Don't Say: "I'm warning you — if you go tonight, you'll give in and smoke a cigarette."

Turn setbacks into learning experiences, not guilt trips. Remind your friend that he or she is not a failure because of one setback.

Do Say: "Okay, so you slipped once. That's not unusual. Let's see why you smoked this one time and think of ways to prevent it from happening again."

Don't Say: "Well, you only have yourself to blame. Don't you know that one cigarette leads to another, and you'll soon be right back where you were? But it's your choice!"

Encourage healthy alternatives, especially physical activity, which can help your friend get away from cigarettes, become more relaxed, and begin a healthier lifestyle.

Do Say: "How about going for a walk? It's a great way to get out of the house and away from cigarettes."

Don't Say: "Stop fidgeting. You're driving me crazy. For Pete's sake, think of something else to do."

When temptation strikes, help your friend remember why he or she wanted to quit. Stress the benefits of quitting, not the consequences of smoking. (Most people who smoke are already well aware of the consequences.)

Do Say: "What did you decide you'll buy with all the money you are saving by quitting?" Or "Won't it be great to wake up without that morning cough?"

Don't Say: "If you don't quit smoking those cancer sticks, you know what's going to happen to you." Or "You don't want to die of lung cancer like your uncle, do you?"

Be sympathetic, especially during the tough times.

Do Say: "I've read that being edgy is normal, especially at first. Let's get some exercise, it may help."