

What works?

People with a lived experience of mental illness want to quit just as much as anyone else and can stop smoking with the right support. There's lots of advice about how best to quit, but the evidence is clear – people who stop smoking need help with cravings and with other things that make them want to smoke, like emotions and habits.

The best way to quit is to:

- Get help from Quitline or another stop smoking service.
- Use stop smoking medications such as nicotine replacement therapy (a patch plus gum, lozenge, mouth spray or inhalator).

**Your support
can also make a
big difference.**

Who can you speak to for support?

- Your GP
- The mental health service that supports the person you care for
- A carer support service such as Carers Australia (1800 242 636)
- Quitline (13 7848)

Handy tools and information

The Quit website has lots of information and tools about getting ready to quit, quitting and staying quit. It also has mental health and quitting-specific information, as well as practical tips for supporting others to quit.

quit.org.au

Quitline
13 7848



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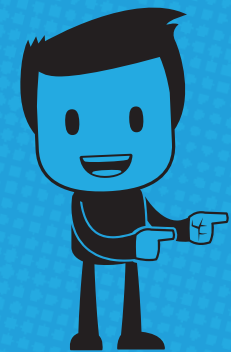
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**Supporting
someone
with a lived
experience
of mental illness
to quit smoking:**

A guide for carers and family



Does mental health worsen if you stop smoking?

No. As well as the many benefits to physical health, the evidence is clear that when people living with a mental illness quit, their mental health improves. The first few days after stopping are hard, but things do get better.

When someone stops smoking for six weeks or more they are more likely to:

- feel less stressed, less anxious and less depressed
- have a more positive mood and quality of life
- have less financial stress.

Nicotine withdrawal and mental health

Some of the withdrawal symptoms that people may experience when they stop smoking (such as irritability, anger, anxiety, depressed mood, restlessness, and difficulty concentrating or sleeping) can be mistaken for a flare up of a mental health condition. Most withdrawal symptoms last from 2–4 weeks and it is rare to experience all symptoms. Support the person you care for to check with their GP, mental health professional or Quitline if you have any concerns.

Checking on medicines

Smoking causes some medicines for mental illness to be metabolised more quickly. Stopping smoking can help the body to better absorb some of these medicines. When someone quits smoking, their doctor will need to look at their medicines. Cutting down or stopping smoking may mean the dose needs to be lowered.

Top reasons people stay quit



Family



Money



Holiday



Housing



Feel better



Better health

How to support someone you care for to stop smoking:

- Quitting is challenging and your support can make a big difference.
- Encourage the person you care for to use their mental health support services and GP.
- Quitline counsellors have helped thousands of people, including those living with a mental illness. You can arrange for Quitline to contact the person you care about for free. Visit www.quit.org.au/callback. People who connect with Quitline are more likely to quit.
- A smokefree house and car can really help.
- Spend time together in places where you can't smoke such as a cafe or the cinema.
- Help take their mind off smoking by going for a walk or playing a game.
- Quitting can take several goes. Make sure they're not too hard on themselves.
- Don't forget to look after yourself! Talk to your GP, Quitline or carer support service.

To help with cravings, try the 4Ds:



Delay



Deep breathe



Do something else



Drink water