

## Expert advises smokers to resolve to quit without E-cigarettes

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Quitting smoking is one of the most common resolutions Americans make each New Year, and strategies can range from going cold turkey to using prescription medications to overcome the addiction.

Those looking to quit, however, should think twice about using [electronic cigarettes](#) as a tool for breaking their habit, cautions UR Medicine smoking cessation expert Scott McIntosh, Ph.D. E-cigarettes have not been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as a safe and effective method for smoking cessation, and the long-term health effects of using e-cigarettes remain unknown, McIntosh says. The components of e-cigarettes can also present real dangers to users and those around them. Earlier this month, a 1-year-old child in Montgomery

County died after ingesting liquid nicotine, the substance used in e-cigarettes. In addition, the batteries in these devices can cause burns or fires.

Instead of e-cigarettes, McIntosh recommends taking advantage of free resources and proven therapies to overcome [nicotine addiction](#).

"Quitting is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your loved ones," says McIntosh, associate professor of Public Health Sciences at the University of Rochester and director of Health Systems Change for a Tobacco-Free Finger Lakes. "Having support and getting treatment for quitting increases your chances of being successful."

Among the strategies McIntosh recommends:

- Make a plan for quitting that includes reasons why you want to quit and solutions for triggers that could lead you to back to smoking.
- Talk to your doctor about counseling and [prescription medications](#) such as patches, gum and lozenges to address cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Combining these approved medications with individual or group counseling has been shown to be the most successful way to help smokers quit.
- Tell your friends, family and coworkers that you plan to quit and ask them to help you stick with it.
- Don't be discouraged. Nicotine in cigarettes is a powerful addiction, and the urge to smoke can be strong. Remember that the cravings will pass whether or not you light up, and if you do slip, don't let that one time defeat you.

Provided by University of Rochester Medical Center

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