

5 tips to help quit smoking in 2021

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Many smokers make a New Year's resolution to quit, so the American Lung Association offers advice to improve their chances of success.

Smoking is a risk factor for severe COVID-19, so quitting is more important than ever, the association noted.

But keep in mind: Switching to [electronic cigarettes](#) is not quitting, the lung association stressed. E-cigarettes are [tobacco products](#) that contain nicotine, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration hasn't approved any [e-cigarette](#) as a smoking cessation aid.

Learn from past experience. Most smokers have tried to quit before and can get discouraged when they look back at previous failed attempts. Instead, analyze what helped you during previous attempts and what you'll do differently this time, the association advised in a news release.

And remember: You don't have to tackle quitting alone. Enrolling in a tobacco counseling program—such as the American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking—can improve your chance of success by up to 60% when used in combination with medication, according to the lung association.

Talk to a doctor about FDA-approved medications to help you quit. Be sure to follow the directions and use them for the full duration they're prescribed.

Every smoker can quit. Find the right combination of techniques for you and don't give up, the association urged. Slip-ups—having a puff or smoking a few cigarettes—are common, but don't signify failure. The important thing is to keep trying.

"The COVID-19 pandemic presents an opportunity for people, when they're ready, to find the proven quit smoking support they need," said Harold Wimmer, the association's president and CEO.

"Quitting smoking will immediately improve your health and might also decrease your odds of severe illness from COVID-19," he added. "It's the perfect way to set yourself up for a healthy new year and healthy years to come."

More information: HelpGuide.org has more on [quitting smoking](#).

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