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Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance and health care specialists at Power Group Companies.

# Manage Stress After You Quit

## *Healthy ways to handle stress*

Quitting smoking is no easy feat, and stress is often one of the biggest obstacles people face after they quit. For many, smoking was a primary way to handle stress, so finding healthy alternative coping strategies is key to remaining smoke-free.

### **How Quitting Affects You**

After you quit, your body goes through physical withdrawal symptoms that can be difficult to cope with. Add that to everyday stressors and take away your primary stress reliever, and it's no wonder quitting can be so difficult.

### **Healthy Coping Strategies**

There are many ways to deal with stress without smoking. In fact, you will likely find that some strategies are much *more* effective than smoking.

- Take care of yourself. Eating healthy foods and drinking plenty of water will help flush the toxins from smoking out of your system. If you don't already, take a daily multivitamin.
- Limit caffeine. After you quit, caffeine may make you feel jittery and anxious, or make sleeping at night difficult. Reduce your intake for now, though you can

likely reintroduce it to your body in time.

- Get some exercise. Physical activity can be a great stress reducer, can help relieve tense muscles and can improve your mood.
- Get enough sleep. Quitting smoking can feel exhausting, both for your body and mind. Get enough sleep to help yourself recover and soon enough your energy will return.
- Relax. Find time in your day to do something relaxing. This could be reading, listening to soothing music, getting a massage, yoga, walking the dog, meditation or taking a warm bath.
- Take deep breaths. If you find yourself stressed or edgy at any point, engage in slow, deep breathing for a few minutes. It can help you clear your mind and relieve tension in your body.
- Reach out to someone. This is a tough time, and you shouldn't have to endure it

alone. Talk about how you're feeling with family, friends, a counselor or support group.

- Take it one day at a time. Focus on being smoke-free *today*. Don't overwhelm yourself by focusing on tomorrow or next week or next year. If you're having a bad day, find a way besides smoking to pamper or treat yourself, or engage in one of the above activities.



## **Remember...**

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health, and your stress will become manageable once you learn to adjust to your smoke-free life. Plus, you'll have more energy, fewer medical problems and more time for other activities!