

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition- Benefits of Quitting Smoking in 2023**

Just minutes after that first smoke-free breath, your body starts to change for the better. Everyone acknowledges giving up cigarettes can be excruciating, with cravings and withdrawal symptoms lingering for weeks, but all the healthy breaths one takes in the weeks and months that follow only multiply. The health benefits of quitting smoking is the first and biggest reason to quit, according to the American Lung Association (ALA). Dr. Robert Redfield former Director of the U.S. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, confirms that it is never too late to quit smoking even persons who have smoked for many years or who have smoked heavily can realize health and financial benefits from quitting smoking.

The health benefits of quitting smoking start about 20 minutes after the last drag. That's when a smoker's heart rate and blood pressure both begin to decline, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS). It takes a few days for blood carbon monoxide levels to normalize. In two weeks to three months, circulation begins to improve and lung function increases, according to the ACS. More gradually smoker's cough goes away as mucus leaves the lungs. This is because the "cilia," tiny hair-like structures in the lungs, have begun to heal. While it can't reverse lung scarring, quitting can help prevent the symptoms of lung disease from worsening, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov). Over time, your risk of pneumonia and lung cancer also decreases, according to the ALA. A stronger body is just one of the benefits of quitting, including reduced risk of bone fractures later in life. A more robust immune system will help you stay healthy, while your muscles will get stronger because of more availability of oxygen in your blood.

Quitting smoking, especially after being addicted to nicotine for many years, is extremely difficult. Even knowing just how bad it is for overall health, many smokers struggle to give up the habit — or stick to their goal after giving it a try. Researchers maintain “How to quit smoking” is one of the most consistently searched terms on Google.

Researchers from the University of Otago found that avoiding smoking and keeping an active social life were the common keys found among New Zealanders who live past 100. The study collected data from 292 centenarians who were free of chronic diseases such as dementia, depression, diabetes, and hypertension. Nicotine is the addictive ingredient in cigarettes. It works by activating the brain's reward system and triggering the release of dopamine. Dopamine can cause feelings of pleasure that will lead a user to return (consciously or subconsciously) to seek out the source and replicate the experience

For New Year 2023 five of the best tips and methodology to quit smoking, include:

(1.) Avoid your triggers. Often there are certain activities or routines you might associate with smoking. Identifying these triggers will help you break the cycle. “Maybe you like to have a cigarette

with your morning coffee or with a cocktail after work. These activities are considered triggers and it's important to identify

(2.) Set a date to quit. Setting a date will give you a concrete goal to work toward.

(3.) Strategies to quit include In-person Cessation Programs, On-line Support Groups, or nicotine replacement therapy. Nicotine replacement products can help alleviate some of the physical symptoms. "The seven FDA-approved medications include nicotine patches, gum, lozenges, inhaler, and nasal spray as well as varenicline (Chantix) and bupropion (Zyban)". The ALA stresses you should always ask your healthcare provider for recommendations.

(4.) Seek guidance from a mentor or on-line support group. Seeking a mentor or support from someone who has been in your shoes can help you stay strong.

(5.) Consider gradually quitting. The ALA says cutting down on the number of cigarettes you smoke a little bit each day slowly reduces the amount of nicotine in your body. Or lastly go Cold Turkey

Regardless, a smoker sees health benefits from cutting out that very first puff. When you are ready to quit tobacco and beat a Nicotine Addiction there are many options available for support.

ALA encourages you to visit their website at: [www.americanlung.org](http://www.americanlung.org). The Association says "the only thing that should go into your lungs is clean air, so if you're inhaling anything, it could potentially be toxic to your lungs!!

New York State Smokers' Quitline welcomes you to Call 1-866-NYQUITS (1-866-697-8487) or visit them at: <https://www.nysmokefree.com/>. The Quitline assists thousands of New Yorkers every year in their attempts to break free from smoking and other tobacco and the service is free and confidential

The CDC funds a tobacco cessation hotline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669), which is free to US residents. Callers are connected to coaches who help smokers create a plan to quit and give them advice when facing withdrawals and cravings.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned about tobacco use and vaping, seeking to educate and update the community regarding its negative consequences in collaboration with Carol Meschkow, Manager- Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on [ww.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit the Vaping Facts and Myths Page of SAFE's website to learn more about how tobacco use and vaping is detrimental to your health [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).