

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Many people use possible weight gain as an excuse to continue smoking. But the fact is, the bad effects that smoking can have on your body are a high price to pay for keeping off a few pounds. Besides, the average weight gain after quitting smoking is only five to seven pounds! Most gainers can lose that amount of weight easily and keep it off.

It is important that you do not go on a diet until you are very comfortable with being a non-smoker. For most people, this means waiting about two to three months after quitting. Quitting smoking and following a diet are two major changes in your life —for best results, take on one at a time!

In the meantime, here are some suggestions that will help you minimize weight gain.

Don't feel you have to eat just because you are quitting smoking! Eat only when you are truly hungry, and keep plenty of sugarless gum, hard candy, or carrots on hand.

Drink six to eight glasses of water per day.

Begin a modest exercise program after consulting your physician. Try walking at a good pace for twenty to thirty minutes three days a week, and gradually increase the time or frequency as your fitness level increases.

Remind yourself that a few extra pounds are no big deal compared to the damage smoking was doing to your body.

If you watch what you eat all week, give yourself a treat on Sunday by allowing yourself freedom to eat what you want.

Sneak exercise into your day. Take the stairs, park your car a little further away, get up from your chair often, and take a walk on your break.

When you do snack, try to stick to pretzels, fruits and vegetables.

Eat five small meals per day instead of three big ones. This will help give you a steady amount of energy throughout the day and will keep you from feeling hungry.

Remember: You would have to gain more than 100 pounds before your weight would do the same damage to your body that smoking does!

Try exercise: It keeps your weight down and also lets your body release endorphins, substances that help you to relax.