PACT
PARTNERSHIP TO ASSIST WITH CESSATION OF TOBACCO

PHARMACY ASSOCIATION OF SASKATCHEWAN

Dealing with Withdrawal Symptoms

When you stop smoking, your brain and body begin the process of healing themselves. At the beginning of the quitting process, some people experience symptoms of nicotine withdrawal, and this is part of the recovery process. For most people, withdrawal is at its worst one day after they stop smoking. It starts to get better after three or four days. After a week to 10 days, all withdrawal symptoms should be gone.

Because the symptoms are most intense in the first few days after you stop, this is when you are most likely to start smoking again. Therefore, it is important to find positive ways to cope. Your main task in quitting is to find a way to get through the first few days. If you do, you have a much better chance of succeeding for good.

Withdrawal Symptoms	**Suggestions for Coping**
Cravings Your body is physically craving nicotine. You may feel jittery, restless, and irritable, have trouble concentrating. Some people describe it as feeling wired, or wired and tired, up one minute and crashing the next.	Drink water, deep breathe, take time off, start a project/hobby, talk to a pharmacist about relief, take a walk.
Difficulty Sleeping Your body is adapting to the removal of nicotine, it could also be medication-related.	Avoid caffeine after noon; relax during the evening, relaxation activity (deep breathing, visualization, meditation).

Fatigue Nicotine is a stimulant and you may no longer have the drug in your system. It may also be related to difficulty sleeping.	Nap, walk, and get fresh air.
Constipation Your intestines will slow down temporarily for 1-2 weeks.	Drink plenty of water. Eat high-fibre foods such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
Itchy Scalp/ Dizziness Your body is getting more oxygen.	Change positions more slowly.
Hunger Food tastes and smells better, mouth missing something, cilia in nose is activated, emotional response to quitting.	Drink plenty of water; eat crunchy health snacks (e.g., baby carrots, cereal).
Depression/Anger You miss smoking, you may be grieving.	Talk to friends and support people.
Tension/Irritability	Go for a walk, take deep breathes.

Try using the 4 Ds: **D**rink plenty of water – between 6 and 8 glasses per day.

Delay for 5 to 7 minutes. The urge should pass.

Do something else.

Deep breathing.

Source: Adapted from CPhA Quit Program