



## Smoking Swaps: 8 Healthy Rituals to Replace Your Bad Habit by Nicorette/NicoDermCQ

To help committed quitters with overcoming the major hurdle of giving up long-established smoking habits, here are 8 daily rituals that can take the place of traditional cigarette breaks, and also lead to an overall healthier lifestyle.

- 1. Wake up with a glass of water**--Highly dependent smokers tend to light up as early as 30 minutes after waking up. Instead of reaching for the cigarettes, make a habit of having a tall glass of iced water shortly after getting out of bed. Water helps to energize your metabolism, hydrates you, and helps your body flush out toxins.
- 2. Do a morning stretch routine**--Starting your day with stretches has many physical and mental benefits, including lowering blood pressure and reducing inflammation within your body. Choose a mix of stretches that span all your major muscle groups, and do each stretch for 20 to 30 seconds. Try to do them shortly after getting out of bed. You'll feel energized and may be less inclined to smoke cigarettes.
- 3. Create a smiling ritual**--It's true that smiling every day improves a person's overall outlook and attitude, which is necessary when you're trying to stay quit. Yet few of us smile consciously, or often enough. For 30 seconds a day, smile at yourself in the mirror. Focus on your end goal of quitting smoking and you'll likely feel a jolt of motivation. It might sound funny, but you'll be amazed at the effects.
- 4. Clear your lungs with a deep-breathing session**--Practicing deep breathing at least twice a day is a great way to reduce stress levels and also help clear your lungs. Try taking in deep breaths – five seconds of inhaling through your nose, followed by five seconds of exhaling through your mouth. This can be done while in an elevator, the shower, or while waiting in line.
- 5. Keep your hands busy with the help of a water bottle**--Smoking isn't just a mental fixation — it's a physical habit too. So part of quitting smoking is keeping your hands busy. A water bottle is a perfect solution; keep it with you everywhere, & refill frequently. Your hands will get the satisfaction of holding something, & you'll also stay hydrated.
- 6. Get outside for the fresh air, not to have a cigarette**--Change the way you view going outside as not a chance to smoke cigarettes, but a way to relax and turn your focus toward the world around you. Find times in your schedule that you can get away each day, such as lunchtime or right after dinner, and go for a brisk stroll. You'll feel both refreshed and energized when you return to your daily activities.
- 7. Do a daily social "reach out"**--At least once a day, at a regular time, send a text, e-mail, or even make a call to a friend you haven't spoken to in a while. When you're feeling the onset of a craving to smoke, focusing on reaching out and being social will help you stay strong and can lead to newfound friendships.
- 8. Have a no-technology hour before bed**--Turn off your phone, computer, laptop, tablet, and TV at least an hour before bedtime. This evening ritual will help your body wind down and sleep more soundly, which is important not only for your quit journey, but your overall healthy life.