



QuitPack News

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Welcome to the sixth edition of the QuitPack News. This monthly newsletter helps us keep in touch with Yukoners who are moving toward becoming smoke-free with the help of a QuitPack. Here's how you can use this newsletter:

- Send in your comments about the QuitPack for us to share in upcoming newsletters— likes, dislikes, articles you'd like to see, etc.
- Let us know **your** tips for others as they try to quit.
- Suggest articles you'd like to see in the next issue.

We look forward to hearing from you!

The Staff at Health Promotion



Getting Physical Can Help You Become Smoke-Free

Physical activity can help boost mental well-being and change your outlook on life. There are many benefits to having a physically active lifestyle. It helps prevent some chronic conditions; it's fun; it can give you a break from the stresses and strains of everyday life; it can be challenging; and it can provide you with new opportunities to meet people who support you in making healthier choices.

Many smokers do not lead a physically active lifestyle. Some smokers may not enjoy exercise because it is uncomfortable or even painful. Nicotine reduces the amount of oxygen that reaches your heart, lungs, and muscles. Less oxygen means shortness of breath and muscle cramps.

Physical activity can play a big role in helping smokers quit smoking and stay smoke-free. Some research has shown that smokers who take up a regular exercise program while they are becoming smoke-free have a greater success rate. Here are some of the reasons why active living and smoke-free living go hand-in-hand:

1. A short burst of physical activity can help curb an urge

Most urges last only a few minutes, and a good way of curbing an urge is distracting yourself. Physical activity – taking a walk around your office or block, doing some sit-ups or push-ups, or going for a bike ride – can take your mind off the urge to smoke until the urge disappears. Of course, you can't exercise whenever and wherever you feel like lighting up – so keep practising other ways to curb the urge.

2. Exercise is a great way to manage weight gain

Many smokers gain a few pounds when they become smoke-free. Food, like exercise, is a way of taking your mind off smoking. For some smokers, fear of gaining weight prevents

them from taking steps to become smoke-free. Starting a modest program of exercise can help keep off those extra pounds. Regular moderate exercise can help burn calories and depress appetite.

3. Exercise is a great way to manage moods and relieve stress

Giving up cigarettes is stressful. Regular moderate exercise is an excellent stress reliever and an effective treatment for mild to moderate depression. Exercise can help lift your mood, deal with negative emotions (such as anger) and bring you a general sense of mental well-being. It can also help you sleep better, reduce tension, and give you more energy.

4. Exercise is a good start to establishing new routines

When you take steps to quit smoking, you will need to break old routines that are associated with smoking and establish new ones. Physical activity is a great way to kick-start these changes. When you exercise regularly, you will establish new routines that do not include smoking and put you in the company of non-smokers. The important thing is to have an exercise program in place and stick with it. Many people find it easier to stick with an exercise program if they do it with others. Find a partner who also wants to start an exercise program. Start or join a walking or running program. You don't need a gym, or special equipment to start.... Just go out your front door!

Getting Physical (con't. from page 1)

5. Exercise can help you develop a new self-concept and see yourself as a non-smoker

Studies have shown that people feel better about themselves once they start some sort of exercise program. There are many reasons for this. It may be that being physically active leads to a sense of accomplishment, and a feeling of control. Learning a new skill or achieving a personal goal can boost self-esteem and increase motivation. Taking steps to become more active, giving up smoking and eating healthier foods can help you stop seeing yourself as a smoker, and begin to see yourself as a person on the move.

How do I get started?

If you haven't been physically active, or if you have had health problems, consult with your doctor before beginning an exercise program.

Then, choose one or two activities that you enjoy. Brisk walking, jogging, biking, swimming, playing a sport like volleyball or hockey are all good choices. Strenuous yard work or shoveling snow is also a good way of being physically active.

Start off slowly, if you are not used to activity. It may hurt at first (two weeks of moderate discomfort is normal at the start of an exercise program). Don't push yourself too hard too soon, and take your time to build up to 30 minutes (or more!) a day.

Your body – your heart, lungs, muscles, tendons, and ligaments – all need to get used to being more physically active. One of the leading causes of injury is doing too much too quickly – so take your time!

Decide when, where and with whom you will exercise each week. For example, you could go for a walk with your spouse after dinner on Monday, Wednesday and Sunday, and go bicycling with your kids after school on Tuesday and Thursday and Saturday. The internet or the public library is a good source of information on beginning an exercise program. Check out the new Canada Games Centre in Whitehorse!

Eventually you will want to increase your physical activity, so that you are exercising with moderate effort for at least 30 minutes every day, or exercising with vigorous effort 3-4 times per week. Moderate activities include brisk walking, biking, raking leaves, swimming, dancing, or aqua fit. Vigorous activities include aerobics, jogging, hockey, basketball, fast swimming and dancing.

What if I can't get motivated?

One of the problems about getting started and keeping going is that if you are feeling down, getting motivated can be particularly difficult.

Finding someone else who would like to become more active with you, and setting goals might be the answer. It's important to recognize that there are going to be days when you just don't feel like exercising. Most people find that if once they begin, they are happy they did (and even happier when they are finished!).

Tracking the Burn

Activity	Calories Burned per hour
Sitting	100
Housework	180
Bicycling (5 mph)	210
Leisure Walking	210
Gardening	220
Golf	250
Lawn-mowing (power)	250
Walking the dog	252
Rowing a boat	300
Swimming	300
Brisk Walking	300
Horseback riding	350
Square dancing	350
Volleyball	350
Rollerblading	350
Chopping wood	400
Bowling	400
Tennis	420

Something Else to Smile About When You Quit!

Smokers who give up smoking are much less likely to lose their teeth prematurely than those who don't kick the habit, pioneering research has shown.

Dental researchers at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK, observed a group of cigarette smokers with chronic gum disease over one year and found some symptoms were more likely to improve in the people who quit during the study period. Chronic gum disease, which is characterized by inflamed gums that increasingly recede from the teeth, can lead to tooth loss in its advanced stages if preventive action is not taken.

Statistics show that smokers are still up to six times more likely to develop gum disease than non-smokers, because the detrimental effect the habit has on their body's immune system makes them less well-equipped to fight back. Dr Philip Preshaw, a clinical lecturer in periodontology (the specialist's term for gum disease) with Newcastle University's School of Dental Sciences, led the research. He said: "Our study shows that people should stop smoking now if they want to increase their chances of keeping their teeth into old age.

"Dentists have known for some time that smokers have worse oral and gum health than non-smokers but for the first time we have shown that quitting smoking together with routine gum treatment results in healthier gums."

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Please send your comments & suggestions for next month's QuitPack News to health.promotion@gov.yk.ca or call the Smokersline toll-free 1-866-221-8393.