

HOW?

Some tips from other smokers...

- ⊗ Get help from a counsellor or via your GP. You are four times more likely to quit if you have this kind of help.
- ⊗ Throw out all cigarettes and ashtrays. Freshen up the house with a good spring clean.
- ⊗ Set a date and stick to it.
- ⊗ Distract yourself when you feel that you need a cigarette. Make a cup of tea, drink fruit juice, or brush your teeth.
- ⊗ Sip water to deal with regular cravings.
- ⊗ Occasional alcohol is fine but too much makes you less able to resist a cigarette.
- ⊗ Take up a new hobby, and exercise more.
- ⊗ Quitting smoking is a positive thing: use the money you save to treat yourself or your family to something nice.
- ⊗ A quit smoking product such as patches or gum really helps. These can double your success rate.

CONTACT

For confidential NHS support and information contact:



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Stop Before the Op



**Why should YOU
stop smoking before
your operation?**

WHAT?

Stopping smoking before surgery can help you recover safely and quickly, even if you stop only a short time before your operation.

Many people know that stopping smoking reduces lung and heart disease. It also saves you money. But do you know why it is a good idea to stop before an operation?

You can improve your safety and reduce the length of time needed for recovery and healing. This will help you leave hospital sooner and get back to your normal life as quickly as possible.

Help and support are available to help you give up before your operation. There is evidence that using a professional counsellor increases the success rate of quitting. This can be by group sessions or working one to one.

If you would like to give up, but have run out of time before your operation, ask if your operation can be delayed a few weeks until you have quit.

WHEN?

If you stop smoking 6–8 weeks before your surgery...

the lungs' cleaning system can clear phlegm and dirt from the lungs in 6 weeks, making chest infection and more serious complications less likely.

If you stop smoking 24–48 hours before your surgery...

your blood can carry more oxygen. Your blood pressure and heart rate improve as well, due to reduced nicotine levels.

If you do not smoke on the day of surgery...

this can reduce the chance of breathing difficulty or low oxygen levels during the operation.

But remember: stopping at any time, even after your operation, is better for you than not stopping!

WHY?

Smokers often stay in hospital longer after an operation than non smokers.

Smokers are more likely to develop pneumonia after surgery. Most people with serious chest infections make a good recovery. But getting a chest infection is one of the reasons smokers are more likely to die after surgery. You may need oxygen, antibiotics and sometimes life support on the Intensive Care Unit.

Broken bones heal more slowly or may fail to heal at all in smokers. Sometimes more surgery will be required.

Your wound will heal more slowly and is more likely to get infected if you smoke. Wound infections can also make you very ill, especially if caused by 'super-bugs' such as MRSA.

Smokers are more likely to have a heart attack or stroke during or after surgery, particularly if you have already had a heart attack or if you have angina, diabetes or high blood pressure.

Smoking affects your anaesthetic. You are more likely to cough during anaesthesia and recovery. This makes some types of anaesthetic unsuitable for smokers.