

Smoking – what to do if you would like to quit

It is well known that smoking can adversely affect your fertility rate and can harm your baby. “So, now would be a good time to quit, if you are planning on having a baby this year”, says Nutritionist and Foresight Practitioner Melody Mackeown.

With the introduction last July of a smoking ban, excellent NHS Stop Smoking services and the availability of a wider range of treatment products (such as Nutritional Therapy or hypnosis), finding the right support to help you stop smoking has never been so good.

So why is stopping smoking so hard?

If you have ever unsuccessfully tried to give up smoking in the past, then you will know that it is fraught with difficulties. Firstly, when you are deprived of nicotine, smokers experience withdrawal symptoms such as depressed mood, irritability, poor concentration, sleep disturbance, hunger and cravings to smoke. Using tobacco puts an immediate end to these, which explains why the relapse rate is so high.

How can Nutritional Support help?

As smoking can upset your blood sugar balance, one of the first things I would look at, as a Nutritionist, are ways to regulate your blood sugar imbalance. Many foods can impact negatively on your blood sugar levels, as well as other stimulants such as coffee, tea, alcohol and chocolate. There are also a number of supplements that may help reduce your craving for nicotine.

You may be interested to know that a blood sugar imbalance can also mirror many of the symptoms above, such as irritability and poor concentrations. Consequently, stabilizing your blood sugar is a must.

Tips for successful quitting

Tips for success include:

- Pick a date to quit that will be stress-free and stick to it
- Book an appointment with your local NHS Stop Smoking service, who will advise you on aids to stop smoking or call the NHS Smoking Helpline 0800 169 0 169 for support or visit your GP
- Book an appointment to see a Nutritional Therapist, who can advise you on ways to reduce your nicotine cravings via food and supplementation
- Plan ahead and avoid stressful situations or people that could tempt you back to smoking
- Take it one day at a time and congratulate yourself for every smoke-free day
- Keep back the money you are saving – and treat yourself (e.g. book yourself in for a massage)
- There's no such thing as having 'just one' cigarette (remember it normally takes 90 days or 3 months to effectively quit). Don't do it!
- Think positively – tell yourself – I can and will do it!

To find out more about how Nutritional Therapy can help you give up smoking, please contact Melody Mackeown.