

# Tobacco Cessation

## Washington Elementary School

### District EBT

What's the leading cause of preventable death in the United States? Tobacco-related diseases. Using tobacco increases the risk of lung and other types of cancer, heart disease and stroke. It also causes respiratory problems, such as coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath.

For many, this isn't surprising news. Though there are many reasons to stop using tobacco, quitting can be a difficult process. You can use the following tips to help you kick your habit once and for all.

#### Quit for a reason

Make quitting personal. Is it to better your health? To protect your family and friends from secondhand smoke? Nail down why you want to quit. When you feel a craving, think about your reason for wanting to quit and use it as motivation.

#### Set a date—and stick to it!

Once you've decided to quit, set a date for the beginning of the process. Share this date, and your goal of quitting, with the people around you. They'll help you stick to it.

#### Additional resources

- [www.SmokeFree.gov](http://www.SmokeFree.gov)—step-by-step guides on quitting and trained counselors available for help
- [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)—offers a guide to quitting, can put you in touch with a local American Cancer Society for help
- [www.betobaccofree.gov](http://www.betobaccofree.gov)—easy to understand and navigate; offers a variety of resources, including live chat with a counselor, mobile apps and quit guides

Sources: American Cancer Society, American Lung Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.meritain.com](http://www.meritain.com)

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#### Don't go it alone

Having a support system to help you quit will increase your chances of success. Surround yourself with helpful friends and family!

#### The benefits of quitting

- **20 minutes after quitting**  
Your heart rate and blood pressure drop.
- **12 hours after quitting**  
The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
- **1 year after quitting**  
The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker.
- **5 years after quitting**  
Risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus and bladder are cut in half. Cervical cancer risk falls to that of a non-smoker. Stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2–5 years.
- **10 years after quitting**  
The risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking. The risk of cancer of the larynx (voice box) and pancreas decreases.
- **15 years after quitting**  
The risk of coronary heart disease is the same as that of a non-smoker.

**Questions? We can help. Just call Meritain Health Customer Service using the number on your ID Card.**

