

Eating healthy and exercising while quitting.



Smokers often avoid between-meal snacking by lighting up. That’s a habit. But research shows smoking is also linked to an increased metabolism. That could explain some weight gain when you quit, even if you don’t eat more or change your level of physical activity. The trick is to plan ahead and decide what’s healthy – or not – before you get hungry.

Snack Healthy. Choose foods with a variety of tastes and textures. Avoid foods high in saturated fats (chips, fried food, doughnuts, burgers). Stay away from processed sugars (sodas, juice, crackers, cookies and sweets).

Crunchy Foods	Sweet Foods	Chewy Foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ apples ■ bell peppers ■ pickles ■ popcorn, unbuttered ■ graham crackers ■ wheat or whole-grain crackers ■ pretzels ■ shredded wheat (without milk) ■ puffed wheat (without milk) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ strawberries ■ vanilla wafers ■ animal crackers ■ cantaloupe ■ frozen fruit pops ■ pineapple ■ peaches ■ blueberries ■ pears ■ fruit sorbet ■ applesauce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ bagel ■ raisins ■ dates ■ raisin bread ■ bran muffin ■ banana ■ gum

If you can’t choose what you eat – eat less

Controlling your daily caloric intake is the secret to controlling your weight. Excess calories are stored as body fat. But remember – don’t make a habit of starving yourself. Excessive dieting can actually SLOW your metabolism as your body works to adapt to the lower calorie intake. Try to balance your food intake with your physical activity throughout the day.

Eat more fruits and vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are important because they’re packed with essential vitamins, minerals and fiber that contribute to good health. Most fruits and vegetables are low in calories and fat, and many contain both water and fiber to help you feel full. Try eating more fruits and vegetables at mealtime, and fewer high calorie foods, to reduce calorie consumption and satisfy your appetite.

Eat more whole grains

Whole grains like wheat, oats, barley, corn and others, do not have the outer layer of the grain removed so they contain more fiber, vitamins and minerals. A diet high in fiber has been shown to reduce the risk for diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers.

Plan on burning a few extra calories when you quit

It’s been estimated that smoking burns an extra 140 to 215 calories per day. The good news is if your eating habits remain the same as they were when you smoked, you can easily burn those calories with a 30-minute daily walk. Nicotine Replacement Therapy or stop-smoking medication, such as nicotine gum, also appears to help protect against weight gain, at least while the meds are being used.

Exercise regularly

Exercise is a big help in controlling weight while quitting. Experts suggest 30 minutes of activity almost everyday for adults. If you already have an exercise program, you might want to consider increasing your aerobic activity to get your heart and lungs working harder. Consult your doctor and plan a program tailored to your age and physical condition. Start out slowly, make it fun, and stick to it.

Try to start exercising before you quit

Quitting takes a lot of effort. So does exercise. The best way to use exercise to help control weight may be to start a regular exercise program several weeks before your quit date. This helps you focus all your energy on quitting when the time comes. And gives you time to decide which exercises are enjoyable and fit your schedule.

Keep busy

Take up a hobby, go to the movies, go for a walk, work around the house, call or visit friends, write letters, read a book, redecorate your house, the possibilities are endless.

Ask yourself: "Is it possible that my weight was too low before?"

Your body naturally adjusts to a "healthy" weight when you're eating well. Quitting will help get your body in sync with its natural weight.