

# Trying to Quit Tobacco This Year?

VHA and its partners can help with your New Year's resolution



## You're Not Alone

There is a long history of smoking and other tobacco use in the military. Veterans and Service members are **more likely** to use tobacco products than their civilian counterparts, especially **male Veterans**, **rural Veterans**, and military personnel who have been deployed. If you use or a Veteran you know uses tobacco and want to quit, you're not alone. **Seven out of every 10 Veterans who smoke would like to quit to improve their mental and physical health, and 75% of Veterans enrolled in Veterans Health Administration (VHA) who have ever smoked have successfully quit.** There are resources and people to help with this journey.

### A New Year, A New You

- Anytime is a great time to make a positive change for your health, and New Year's is no exception.
- This is especially important for those who served in the military as VA **estimates** 900,000 Veterans remain at risk of lung disease from age, smoking, and environmental exposures during their service.
- Quitting tobacco is also part of a larger conversation about healthy living called **Whole Health** that you can have with your Veterans Health Administration (VHA) healthcare team. Make what matters most to you a priority starting now. For example, **quitting smoking** means you may get to see your children or grandchildren graduate, food will taste better, you'll **sleep better**, and you'll have more energy to do the things you want to do.

## You Don't Have to Quit Alone

- Talk to your VA health care provider about available tobacco use treatments. Counseling offers Veterans the best chance of becoming and staying tobacco-free when combined with another treatment, such as a prescription medication or nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). VA offers **remote, group, and individual counseling, prescription medications**, and NRT products.
- Sign up for a **free, daily texting service called SmokefreeVET** by texting VET to 47848. Regular texts offer tips, motivation, and support for up to 6 weeks after your quit date. Para inscribirse en SmokefreeVET en español, manda el texto VETesp al 47848.
- Call **VA's free quitline 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838)** for counseling and help with developing a plan to stop using tobacco. Quitline counselors are available Monday through Friday, between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. Eastern time, to help you prepare for potential challenges and avoid relapse. Counselors offer continued support through follow-up calls and counseling sessions, available in English or Spanish.
- Join **VHA partner The American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking program**, which helps smokers quit tobacco through group clinics, online guides, support communities, and more.
- Download VA's **free Stay Quit Coach app** to make a plan to quit, learn how quitting helps your health, use interactive tools to curb cravings, and receive motivational messages to help stay tobacco-free.

▼ **20 MINUTES**  
after quitting, your heart  
rate drops back to normal.

▼ **1-3 MONTHS**  
after quitting, your heart  
attack risk starts to drop.

For more VA tobacco cessation resource information, see [www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco).

For more information about ALA and its resources, please visit their website at [www.lung.org](http://www.lung.org).

VHA's National Center for Healthcare Advancement and Partnerships' mission is to serve as a trusted resource and a catalyst for the growth of effective partnerships at the national, state, and community level and advance the health and well-being of Veterans through the exploration of innovative, safe, and ethical emerging therapies. To learn more about VHA partnerships, please visit [va.gov/healthpartnerships](http://va.gov/healthpartnerships).

VA



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