

Nicotine Withdrawal

Tobacco users usually suffer both physical and psychological withdrawal symptoms when they try to stop (tobacco users have to overcome both of these to be successful at quitting and staying tobacco free).

- **Physically**, the body is reacting to the absence of the drug nicotine.
- **Psychologically**, the tobacco user is faced with giving up a habit.

Withdrawal symptoms include:

- nervousness
- headaches
- irritability
- difficulty sleeping
- depression
- coughing
- difficulty concentrating
- restlessness
- tiredness
- increased appetite

Uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms lead the tobacco user to again start using enough tobacco to boost blood levels of nicotine back to the level at which no symptoms occur.

If a person has used tobacco regularly for a few weeks or longer and abruptly stops using tobacco or significantly reduces the amount used, withdrawal symptoms will occur. Chemical withdrawal symptoms usually occur within a few hours of the last use and peak about two to three days later. Symptoms typically last for two to three weeks.¹

Nicotine Replacement Therapy, Bupropion, or Varenicline can help relieve withdrawal symptoms.

Please note:

The following withdrawal symptoms should be reported to a health care provider:

- Pain or tightness in chest
- Shortness of breath
- Blood in sputum
- Severe coughing or wheezing
- Long-lasting dizziness
- Anything that interferes with ability to perform one's usual daily tasks

When in doubt, contact your health care provider.

For help quitting, call the Utah Tobacco Quit Line at 1.888.567.TRUTH or visit utahquitnet.com

¹ http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_10_13X_Guide_for_Quitting_Smoking.asp