

YOUR NEXT STEPS:

Stopping smoking is one of the best decisions you can make for your health. VA is here to support you every step of the way. Take the first step today and move towards a healthier, smoke-free future.

- 1. Decide to Stop:** Commit to stop smoking for your health and the health of those around you.
- 2. Seek Support:** Reach out to VA resources, friends, and family for encouragement and support.
- 3. Set a Stop Date:** Choose a date to stop and mark it on your calendar. Prepare by removing all tobacco products from your home and car.
- 4. Follow Your Plan:** Use the resources available to you, stay positive, and don't be afraid to ask for help.

YOU CAN DO THIS!

For More Information:

- **Visit:** <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco/>
- **Call: 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838)** between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. ET, Monday – Friday. Tobacco quitlines can double your chances of quitting, compared with getting no support. Call to make your quit plan, get individual counseling, and develop strategies for preventing relapse. Quitline counselors offer continued support through follow-up calls, and counseling is available in English and Spanish.



My Smoking Cessation

Workbook: A Resource for Women



Women Veterans Call Center

The Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC) is your guide to VA. All calls are answered by women, many of whom are Veterans themselves, who will help you navigate VA, answer your questions about VA services and benefits available to you, and connect you with the Women Veterans Program Manager at your local VA medical center. This service is free, and you can call as many times as you need.

Call or text us at 855-VA-WOMEN (855-829-6636). WVCC representatives are available Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ET, and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. ET. You can also chat with us online and learn more by visiting <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov>



WOMEN VETERANS CALL CENTER
855.VA.WOMEN

Am I Eligible for VA Health Care?

Everyone's situation is unique and so is their eligibility. To find out if you are eligible to enroll, visit <https://www.va.gov/health-care/eligibility>

Apply Online or By Mail

Go to <https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply>

Apply in Person

Visit the nearest VA medical center or clinic. You can locate your nearest VA health facility at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>

Apply by Phone

To apply for VA benefits you may have earned—such as preventative care, inpatient and urgent care services—call 1-877-222-8387

Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–8 p.m. ET.
Veterans Benefits Administration 1-800-827-1000
www.vba.va.gov

WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

SMOKING CESSATION



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

A HEALTHIER FUTURE FOR WOMEN VETERANS—STOP SMOKING TODAY!

There is a long history of smoking and other tobacco use in the military. Many Veterans used tobacco while they served, particularly during deployments. Now seven out of every 10 Veterans who smoke would like to stop — for both the physical benefits and their mental health.

If you're one of those Veterans, or if the Veteran in your life is trying to stop, you've come to the right place. VA offers resources for making a quit plan and sticking to it.

WHY STOP SMOKING?

Improve Your Health:

- **Heart Health:** Stopping smoking reduces your risk of heart disease, heart attacks, and strokes; and can reduce blood pressure and cholesterol.
- **Lung Health:** Your lungs will start to repair themselves, making breathing easier and reducing the risk of lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- **Lower Cancer Risk:** Smokers who stop have a lower risk of bladder cancer than current smokers.
- **Strengthened Immune System:** Your body will better fight colds, flu, and other infections.
- Improve skin, night vision, and boost effectiveness of other medications.

Feel Better Everyday:



Mental Health: Research has also found that stopping smoking can decrease feelings of depression, anxiety, and stress and improve your mood and quality of life.



More Energy: Feel less tired and more energetic throughout the day.



Taste and Smell: Enjoy your food more as your sense of taste and smell improves.

Protect Your Loved Ones:

- **Secondhand Smoke:** Stopping smoking protects your family and friends from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke can also lead to cancer in cats, dogs, and other pets.
- **Role Model:** Set a positive example for children and others around you.

GENDER-SPECIFIC REASONS FOR WOMEN TO STOP SMOKING:

Reproductive Health:

- **Fertility:** Smoking can reduce fertility and make it harder to get pregnant.
- **Cervical Cancer:** Smoking increases your risk of cervical cancer by 50%.
- **Pregnancy Risks:** Smoking during pregnancy increases the risk of complications such as preterm birth, low birth weight, and stillbirth.
- **Combined with Birth Control:** Women on hormonal birth control who smoke have a higher risk of heart attacks and stroke.

Bone Health:

- **Osteoporosis:** Women who smoke are at a higher risk of developing osteoporosis, a condition that weakens bones and increases the risk of fractures.

Menstrual Health:

- **Menstrual Cycle:** Smoking can cause irregular periods and more severe menstrual symptoms, such as pain and cramps.

Menopause:

- **Early Onset:** Smoking can cause earlier onset of menopause, leading to symptoms such as hot flashes and night sweats sooner than expected.
- **Post-Menopausal Health:** Women who smoke after menopause have a higher risk of heart disease and other health issues.



RESOURCES TO HELP YOU STOP

1. Evidence-Based Treatment:

- **Counseling and Support:** Access to personalized counseling and support groups to help you stay on track.

2. Medications and Nicotine Replacement:

- **Medications:** Using FDA-approved medications, such as varenicline, or nicotine replacement therapy in the form of patches, lozenges, or gum can help you manage nicotine withdrawal symptoms and cope with the urge to smoke while you're quitting. Your VA provider can guide you through the available options to help you decide which is likely to work best for you.

3. Online Resources and Apps:

- **Stay Quit Coach App:** Download this free app to identify your personal reasons for quitting, set goals, and track your progress over time <https://mobile.va.gov/app/stay-quit-coach>
- **VA's Tobacco & Health Website:** Visit <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco/how-to-quit.asp> for resources specifically designed for women.
- **SmokefreeVET:** VA's quit tobacco text messaging program provides tailored tips, support, and encouragement. Text VET to 47848 (*Texto VETEsp a 47848 para Español*) or visit smokefree.gov/VET to sign up.
- **Smokefree Vet and Smokefree Women:** Visit <https://veterans.smokefree.gov/> or <https://women.smokefree.gov/> to learn more and create your personalized plan online.