



Health & Fitness Weekly Wellness Message

Ditch Dip for a Day? Believe You Can. Do It for You!

You may not think you can quit chewing tobacco for good, but what about for a day? If you join the Great American Spit Out (GASpO) on 23 February 2012, and stay tobacco-free for 24 hours, it just might be the first day of the rest of your life without smokeless tobacco controlling your every action.

The first step in quitting smokeless tobacco begins with belief. Believe you can do it. Then plan a maneuver and arm yourself with the best weapons to combat any obstacles you might face. Being prepared helps you overcome fear, meet your challenges head on, and triumph. Belief and preparation are critical keys to success.

Been thinking of quitting but not sure how to get started? Here are a few steps on how you can get prepared to quit tobacco for a day from ucanquit2.org:

Write down your reasons to quit. The number one reason to quit is for yourself. You'll be healthier and your risk of mouth cancer will decrease, along with your chances of losing part of your lip, cheek, or tongue. You'll be more attractive because your teeth will stop rotting, your gums won't continue to recede, and your breath will be fresher. Does saving cash motivate you? Click on the following link to see how much money you can save by quitting:
<http://www.ucanquit2.org/calculator/Default.aspx>

Pick the date. GASpO is a perfect time to quit smokeless tobacco because others will be quitting along with you.

Make a plan. Check out Train2Quit, an interactive online program that helps you put together a solid plan to beat the odds and double your chances of successful quitting: <http://www.ucanquit2.org/train2quit.aspx>
Talk with your physician and determine if nicotine replacement therapy (e.g., gum, nicotine, patches) is right for you. Make an appointment to get your teeth cleaned on quit day to remind yourself of the fresh, clean feeling you once had, and can have again.

Cut back your usage. Unless you are prepared to go "cold turkey", tapering your usage will make quit day easier. Try to cut down to half the amount before you try to quit. For a week or two before your quit date, carry half the amount in your tin or pouch, or leave the entire container behind when you go out. Start cutting back when and where you chew. Try to go as long as you can before giving in to your cravings.

Get a support system. Seek out family and friends to help you get through this important day. Ask them for their patience and understanding. Look for others who might want to quit with you, and support each other. Connect with Live Chat service, available 24/7, where you can get encouragement from a trained quit coach: <http://www.ucanquit2.org/livehelp/Default.aspx>
TRICARE® beneficiaries who are not eligible for Medicare can call one of these national quit lines for support:

<http://www.smokefree.gov/> - the government web site dedicated to quitting smoking developed by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and other partners.

<http://www.nstep.org> - National Spit Tobacco Education Program Web site dedicated to educating the baseball community and the general public about the dangers of using smokeless tobacco. Also provides tips and resources for quitting smokeless tobacco.

By following these steps, when GASpO or your quit day comes around, you'll be almost ready. That day, be sure to change your routine so that you can avoid triggers. Eat each meal in a different place. Stay busy and include a walk, run, or some other workout during the day. And, most importantly, have plenty of chew substitutes on hand, like sugar-free hard candy or gum, cinnamon sticks, mints, popcorn, beef jerky, or sunflower seeds. Follow these helpful tips and quit dip for this one very important day. GASpO just might be your stepping stone to quitting smokeless tobacco for a lifetime.

Want to stay informed about what's happening in Health and Fitness – become a fan of ours on FACEBOOK! Go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Washington-DC/National-Defense-University-Health-and-Fitness-Program/128551210497738> and click on "Sign Up."