



# Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at Clarke & Company Benefits, LLC

Staying smoke-free is the most difficult part of the quitting the addictive habit. Some people experience cravings for months or even years after they quit.

## SMOKING AND YOUR HEALTH

Few people would disagree smoking is hazardous to their health, yet millions continue to take part in this unhealthy habit.

### The Scary Truth

According to the American Lung Association (ALA), smoking kills more than 480,000 people in the United States each year, 40,000 of those deaths being from secondhand smoke. The ALA predicts these numbers will continue to rise. Smoking kills more people than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, homicides, suicides and illegal drugs combined.

### You Can Quit

Quitting smoking can one of the most difficult things a person can undertake. However, with some thoughtful planning and a strong will, you can quit. There are several smoking-cessation tools and techniques available to help you quit smoking:

- Nicotine replacement therapy
- Scheduled reduction
- Quitting “cold turkey”
- Hypnosis and acupuncture
- Prescription drugs

If you want to quit smoking for good, here are some suggestions to help you succeed:

- Make the decision to quit and stick to it.
- Choose a start date and method.
- Plan for cravings during withdrawal periods and determine your coping method(s).

- Commit to long-term use of the methods mentioned above to ensure that you will succeed.

### Benefits of Quitting

Quitting smoking has many short- and long-term health benefits:

- *After 20 minutes*—Blood pressure, pulse rate and body temperature return to normal.
- *After 8 hours*—The body starts to heal itself—the carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal and your oxygen level increases to normal.
- *After 24 hours*—Your chance of having a heart attack decreases.
- *After 48 hours*—Nerve endings begin to regenerate and your sense of taste and smell improve.
- *After 72 hours*—Bronchial tubes relax, lung capacity increases and breathing becomes easier.
- *After 2 weeks to 3 months*—Your circulation improves, physical activity becomes easier and lung function increases up to 30 percent.
- *After 1 to 9 months*—Coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath decrease while your body’s overall energy level increases.
- *After 5 years*—Your chance of dying from lung cancer decreases by almost 50 percent.



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