Quitting smoking is the #1 most important thing you can do to improve your health. It’s never too late to quit!

### HOW DOES SMOKING AFFECT YOUR HEART?

- Raises your LDL (“lousy”) cholesterol
- Lowers your HDL (“healthy”) cholesterol
- Speeds up your heart rate
- Raises your blood pressure
- Makes your heart work harder
- Makes you 2-4x more likely to suffer a heart attack than non-smokers

### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU QUIT?

- **20 Minutes:** Blood pressure and heart rate decrease.
- **8 Hours:** Carbon monoxide levels decrease. Oxygen levels increase.
- **2 Days:** Sense of taste and smell increases. Heart attack risk decreases.
- **3 Days:** Bronchial tubes relax and lung capacity increases.
- **2 Weeks to 3 Months:** Blood circulation improves and lung function increases by up to 30%.
- **6 Months:** Coughing, fatigue, shortness of breath and congestion all decrease.
- **1 Year:** Risk of heart attack ↓ by up to 50%.
- **10 Years:** Risk of lung cancer ↓ by up to 50%.
- **15 Years:** Heart attack risk ↓ to the level of someone who never smoked.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Quitting smoking is a complex process that requires preparation. One good high-level strategy is the STAR approach:

- SET your quit date.
- TELL family and friends and get their support.
- ANTICIPATE challenges and setbacks so you can get back on track.
- REMOVE tobacco products from your environment.

Download the top 5 questions to ask your healthcare provider at yourheart.ca