



Anxiety

ARIZONA SMOKERS' HELPLINE 1-800-556-6222 - WWW.ASHLINE.ORG

What to Expect

- ▼ You may feel quite "tense" and agitated within 24 hours of quitting.
- ▼ You may feel a tightness in your muscles—especially around the neck and shoulders.
- ▼ These feelings will pass with time.

Frequency

- ▼ Recent studies have found that 60-90% of quitters report feelings of increased anxiety within 1 week of quitting.
- ▼ If anxiety occurs, it will usually begin within the first 24 hours, peak in the first 1-2 weeks and disappear within a month.

Self Management

- ▼ Take a walk.
- ▼ Take a hot bath.
- ▼ Try a massage.
- ▼ Try to take a few minutes out of your day to meditate, or do stretching exercises.
- ▼ Set aside some "quiet time" every morning and evening—a time when you can be alone in a quiet environment.

Nicotine and Your Mind and Body

- ▼ Anxiety is usually measured as an increase in muscle tension as well as an increased sensitivity to muscle tension. Laboratory research shows that the anxiety produced from quitting tobacco may be due to temporary changes in your brain chemistry. There is some evidence that tobacco use actually improves anxiety so it may be that part of the anxiety felt when you quit is what nonsmokers "normally" experience.
- ▼ Most of the anxiety felt immediately after you quit is due to temporary changes.

Related Notes

- ▼ Nicotine gum has been found to help reduce anxiety associated with quitting tobacco. You may also try a nicotine patch.

References available upon request.