



Concentration

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

What to Expect

- ▼ You may feel unable to do one task for a long time.
- ▼ You may put off or avoid difficult or unwanted tasks.
- ▼ Cigarettes provided you with relaxation breaks. Now that you have quit, you still need to take a break. This may be quite difficult because cigarettes gave you a reason to stop working for 10-15 minutes and now you may have to manufacture a new reason.

Frequency

- ▼ Recent studies have found that 55-75% of quitters report problems with concentration within 1 week of quitting.
- ▼ If difficulty concentrating occurs, it will usually begin within the first 24 hours, peak (stay high) for the first 1-2 weeks, and disappear within a month.

Self Management

- ▼ Take a break; gaze into a photo, look out a window, close your eyes and relax for ten minutes.
- ▼ Try to come up with other things that you can do on a 10 minute break—maybe you can get some minor chores out of the way as a “break” from a repeated activity.
- ▼ Do different tasks instead of focusing on any one activity for too long.
- ▼ If you can, put off work when you feel unable to do it.
- ▼ Do important tasks during the times when you feel alert.

Nicotine and Your Body and Mind

- ▼ Difficulty concentrating is one of the most commonly reported withdrawal symptoms. Results from a number of research studies indicate that quitting may “slow” the activity of a number of different brain chemicals and that this slowness may be reflected in drowsiness and poor concentration.

Related Notes

- ▼ You may want to try nicotine patches, as they have been shown to improve concentration. There is less evidence that nicotine gum works.

References available upon request.