



Restlessness

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

What to Expect

- ▼ You may feel unable to sit still for long periods of time.
- ▼ You may feel the need to do something with your hands.
- ▼ You may think, "I should be doing something else now."
- ▼ These thoughts and feelings will generally pass after a week or two. You may still feel bursts of restlessness for up to a month after quitting.

Frequency

- ▼ Recent studies have found that 55-75% of quitters report increases in restlessness within one week of quitting.
- ▼ If restlessness occurs, it will usually begin within the first 24 hours, remain strong the first 1-2 weeks, and disappear within a month.

Self Management

- ▼ Listen to your body. If you feel that you need to move around, you probably need a break; get up and stretch or go for a brief walk.
- ▼ Expect feelings of restlessness. Take regular 10-minute mental and physical breaks from whatever work you are doing. Be active during those break; walk, stretch, run.
- ▼ You may want to try squeezing a rubber ball or one of many "stress relief" items to help keep your hands busy.

Nicotine and Your Mind and Body

- ▼ Restlessness may be due to the lack of nicotine in the body's system. It may also be due to biochemical changes in your brain as well as more conditioned responses to various smoking situations.
- ▼ Now that you have quit smoking, you may not know what to do with yourself in situations that used to be associated with smoking.

Related Notes

- ▼ Using nicotine patches/gum may help lessen restlessness.

References available upon request.