Does using tobacco help control weight?

The effect of smoking on weight is complicated. Accumulation of stomach fat makes quitting smoking difficult. Quit attempts lead to weight gaining. Clustering of smoking with risk factors such as poor nutrition and inactivity.

Smoking may lead to weight gain that offsets its "slimming effect." People who smoke heavily often weigh more than those who smoke less.

Will I gain weight if I quit using tobacco?

After quitting tobacco, the body must adjust to a drop in nicotine levels. This might include an increased appetite and cravings for comfort food, which can lead to weight gain.

However, as smoking also contributes to fat accumulation, it isn’t an efficient way of controlling weight or preventing obesity.

You can avoid gaining weight by using the following strategies:

1. Avoid skipping meals
2. Listen to your body
3. Eat healthy snacks
4. Engage in physical activity
5. Meditate
6. Keep healthy food out of the house
7. Chew sugar-free gum
8. Take part in an activity or hobby

Did you know? Women often expect to lose weight, but it gains weight.

How can I quit using tobacco?

When you are ready, here are a few ways to get started:

1. Talk to a health professional
2. Join a support group
3. Eat well
4. Stay active

Resources

- Smoker’s Helpline (1 877 513-5533)
- Tobacco Atlas (tobaccoatlas.org)
- Canada’s Food Guide (healthy.canadians.gc.ca)
- Heart&Stroke Healthy Weight Action Plan (heartstroke.on.ca)
- Tobacco Use, Nutrition & Weight, Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey 2014
- Tobacco Action Plan 2009-2014

Smoking makes it harder for your body to absorb different vitamins and minerals that are important for your health.

Vitamin A
- Deficiency
- Antioxidant
- Increases, immune system

Vitamin C
- Deficiency
- Antioxidant
- Increases, immune system

Vitamin D
- Deficiency
- Aids in calcium absorption
- Increases, bones and teeth

Vitamin E
- Deficiency
- Antioxidant
- Increases, blood

Calcium
- Bones, muscles, nerves