

# LIVING with DM

## Recommendations for stopping smoking

Coordinator: **Dr Antonio Pérez Pérez**

Head of Unit,  
Endocrinology and Nutrition Department.  
Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Barcelona.  
Medical Professor,  
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. CIBERDEM

Author: **Dr Cristina Pinet Ogué**

Assistant Psychiatrist. Manager  
of the Tobacco Dependency Treatment Programme.  
Addictive Behaviour Unit, Psychiatry  
Department. Hospital de la Santa Creu  
i Sant Pau, Barcelona.



In collaboration with



Endorsed by



SED | SOCIEDAD ESPAÑOLA DE DIABETES FSED | FUNDACIÓN DE LA SOCIEDAD ESPAÑOLA DE DIABETES

# Diabetes and tobacco

Cigarettes are often thought of as a way of controlling weight and therefore of reversing diabetes. However, the opposite is true: smoking promotes the development of type 2 diabetes and vascular complications. It also increases resistance to insulin and can raise blood sugar levels. As a result, smokers tend to have poorer metabolic control.

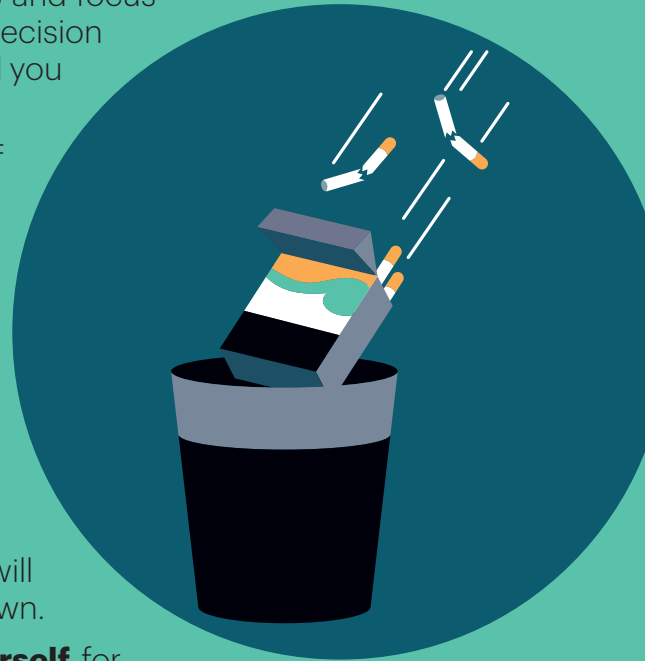
It is not fully understood how this association works, but it is well known that nicotine interacts with insulin, leading to altered glucose metabolism. It is also known that other substances in tobacco smoke damage cells, causing inflammation and weakening their response to insulin.



Stopping smoking is one of the most important decisions you can make to improve your health, particularly if you have diabetes, a disease that can have many complications.

# Tips

- ★ The first step in stopping smoking is to find your own **reason** to quit. Of course, the desire to reverse diabetes is obvious, but there may also be other reasons, and it is important to consider them. The most common, after taking care of your health, are economic ones, or wanting to be an example to family or friends; there may also be aesthetic reasons, or a desire not to be dependent on cigarettes. Make a list of your own reasons and assess the importance you give to each one. Make a note of what else might help you take the leap.
- ★ Once you have done this, you will be more ready to make the **decision** to stop smoking.
- ★ Choose your **D-Day** (the day you will no longer smoke) and focus on a series of changes that will help you stick to your decision not to touch tobacco. Seek support from people around you who do not smoke.
- ★ The day before, get rid of anything that reminds you of it: ashtrays, cigarettes, etc.
- ★ Think positively: it will be a **great day**.
- ★ In the first few days, avoid situations that you associate with smoking: going out with friends who smoke, attending celebrations... Avoid or moderate the consumption of alcohol, as it can increase the desire to smoke. If you usually drink a lot of coffee or tea, moderate your consumption from the start so as not to become more restless.
- ★ Keep busy and **be as physically active** as you can. It will make you feel better and help you keep your weight down.
- ★ Take it day by day, and every night **congratulate yourself** for staying smoke free.
- ★ You may experience some **withdrawal symptoms**, such as anxiety, irritability, changes in sleep and appetite, cough, headache, urge to smoke, etc. This is normal and it's because your brain is adapting to functioning without nicotine. You might need drug therapy- ask your doctor.
- ★ From the first few smoke-free days you will start to notice **positive changes**: you will breathe better, your sense of smell and taste will improve, you'll feel good about yourself, etc.
- ★ It is important you know that it is easier to quit smoking with the **support of healthcare personnel**. Ask for an appointment at your health centre. You can also get help at some pharmacies. They will assess whether you need drug therapy to control withdrawal symptoms and will monitor you to help you overcome any difficulties that may arise.



## Remember...

- ★ Tobacco use, in addition to being a risk factor for respiratory diseases heart disease and cancer, also has a negative impact on the management of diabetes and its complications.
- ★ Stopping smoking is an essential health measure and has other positive aspects.
- ★ In addition to following these recommendations, you can ask health workers for information and guidance.