

Smoking Withdrawal: How to Handle Symptoms

Symptom	How long it lasts	What you can do
Irritability	2 to 4 weeks	Walks, hot baths, relaxation techniques, nicotine gum
Insomnia	1 week	Avoid caffeine in the evening, practice relaxation techniques
Fatigue	2 to 4 weeks	Take naps, do not push yourself, nicotine gum
Cough, dry throat, nasal drip	A few days	Drink plenty of fluids, try cough drops
Dizziness	1 or 2 days	Take extra caution, change positions to keep your balance
Lack of concentration	A few weeks	Plan work load accordingly and avoid additional stress during first few weeks
Tightness in the chest	From tension of nicotine withdrawal or caused by sore muscles from coughing – a few weeks	Use relaxation techniques, especially deep breathing; nicotine gum may help
Constipation, gas, stomach pain	1 or 2 weeks	Drink plenty of fluids and eat plenty of fruit, vegetables, and whole grain foods
Hunger	Up to several weeks	Drink water or low-calorie liquid and be prepared with low calorie snacks
Craving for a cigarette	Most severe the first 2 or 3 days - urges can last about 2-10 minutes	Wait out urges and distract yourself with an exercise like walking or deep breathing