



# Enjoy Meals Without Smoking

Your body may go through nicotine withdrawal when you try to cut down or stop using tobacco. This is why you might have a hard time dealing with some situations that are linked to your tobacco use during this time of recovery.

## Why does this happen?

- ▶ Food may be used to feel the same affect as cigarettes: enjoyment, relaxation, comfort, having fun with friends etc. Smoking and eating are both ways to meet these needs, so when you quit smoking you may want to eat more.
- ▶ Nicotine can stop feelings of hunger for as long as one hour and can make your blood sugar level go up.
- ▶ When you quit, your blood sugar may drop, causing you to feel hungry.

## How common is this?

- ▶ Stress levels may be highest during the first two weeks after quitting. They do go away.
- ▶ During the first few weeks of quitting, even a small stressor can lead to the urges to smoke.
- ▶ As time goes by the urges get weaker.

## What can you do about it?

- ▶ Know what stressor or negative moods give you the urge to smoke. Think of other ways to cope with these situations.
- ▶ Get up from the table immediately after a meal.
- ▶ If you are alone, call a friend as soon as you've finished eating.
- ▶ If you're not alone, ask someone to massage your shoulders.
- ▶ If you have coffee or a fruit drink, focus on the taste.
- ▶ Brush your teeth or use mouthwash right after meals.
- ▶ Wash the dishes by hand after eating.
- ▶ Instead of smoking, read your list of reasons for quitting.
- ▶ Call a relative, friend or the NY State Smokers' Quitline for support.



**REMEMBER:** When you know your "trigger" situations, you can begin to handle them better. Eating is often an important trigger.