

3 tips for boosting success with an online quit-smoking program

a third of U.S. adult smokers — 12 million people — looked online for quit-smoking information and resources in 2017, **more than double the number from 12 years ago**. As more smokers turn to the internet for help to quit, they can increase their chances of success with a few tips for making the most of online tools and resources.

Here are three research-backed tips for boosting success with an online quit program.

1. Make a customized quit plan

Every tobacco user brings a unique experience to the process of quitting. But with the right combination of tools and skills, anyone can be successful. A digital quit-smoking program developed by Truth Initiative in collaboration with Mayo Clinic — **BecomeAnEX®** — helps smokers create their own plan to live a tobacco-free life. Research shows that using BecomeAnEX quadruples smokers' chances of quitting.

BecomeAnEX leads users through steps to make a customized quit plan, including setting a quit date, identifying smoking triggers and learning how to beat them. Throughout the process, users learn not only about their own unique needs, but also about the nature of tobacco addiction. This knowledge helps prepare and sustain smokers throughout their journey to quit.

For example, people learn how tobacco use changes brain chemistry, **how to cope with withdrawal** and **why quitting “cold turkey” is not an effective quit method**.

2. Connect with peers

Online communities are a major component of online quit programs, and research shows that this social support makes a difference. A study published in the **Journal of Medical Internet Research** found that **smokers who became more socially connected on BecomeAnEX were more likely to quit** three months after they enrolled.

Engaging in an online social community provides smokers with access to a global and diverse network, around-the-clock support and a place to build social relationships with others who know exactly what they're going through. Every day in **the EX Community on BecomeAnEX**, thousands of current and former smokers connect through private messages, blogs, message boards and group discussions to give advice, share experiences, offer encouragement and **celebrate successes**.

“Stopping smoking doesn't need to be an individual activity,” **said Dr. J. Taylor Hays**, a professor of medicine at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and director of the Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center, in one of his weekly EX Community blog posts. “By being open and sharing with others you can strengthen your own road to recovery, and who knows, you might just help someone else along the way.”

3. Consider nicotine replacement therapy

Combining participation in a digital quit-smoking program with a form of nicotine replacement therapy, like lozenges or gum, can be especially effective.

A [study published in Nicotine & Tobacco Research](#) suggests that smokers who use an internet quit smoking program are more likely to stick with it if they connect with other members in an online social network, and if the program provides nicotine replacement therapy. Expert information on BecomeAnEX helps smokers learn about nicotine replacement therapy and decide if it is right for them.

A premium version of BecomeAnEX designed for employers and health plans — the [EX[®] Program](#) — provides participants with expert one-on-one coaching with a tobacco treatment specialist. EX Coaches help participants choose the right form of nicotine replacement therapy, which is delivered right to their home.

For more information on how to quit tobacco, read the [10 steps to make a plan to quit smoking](#).