



QUITLINE IOWA

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# Alternative Methods for Quitting

The best proven method to give up tobacco is to have a plan, use FDA approved medication, and get support, like the free coaching offered through Quitline Iowa. Below is a discussion of other quit methods. These have not been approved by the FDA for tobacco cessation. ***The Iowa Department of Public Health does not recommend using any of these methods.*** This is provided only as a service to interested individuals.

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## **Hypnosis**

Hypnosis is a procedure in which a health professional suggests that an individual experience changes in sensations, perceptions, thoughts, or behavior. During hypnosis, subjects enter a state of inner absorption, concentration, and focused attention, in which they pick up suggestions particularly well. It has been suggested that for smoking cessation, hypnosis acts on underlying impulses to weaken the desire to smoke or strengthen the will to quit. Although hypnosis is widely promoted as a method for aiding smoking cessation, recent reviews indicate that there is not sufficient evidence to support this claim.

## **Aversive Therapy**

There are several techniques that can be used within a therapeutic setting aimed at pairing smoking with negative associations. Techniques such as rapid smoking, rapid puffing and focused smoking involve smoking in an unpleasant and concentrated manner and should only be used with appropriate medical screening and supervision. Although these techniques are not commonly used today, studies have shown higher abstinence rates for individuals using these methods.

## **Acupuncture**

Acupuncture is a component of the health care system of China that can be traced back for at least

2,500 years. This treatment involves the placement of needles in specific areas of the body with the intent to promote abstinence from tobacco use. Although there has been evidence that suggests a variety of medical conditions may benefit from the use of acupuncture, there has been no conclusive evidence showing acupuncture as an effective smoking cessation technique.

## **Cold Laser**

Cold laser therapy providers advertise this method as a way to help people quit smoking. The treatment is supposed to relax the smoker and release endorphins (naturally-occurring pain relief substances) in the body to simulate the effects of nicotine in the brain, or balance the body's energy to relieve the addiction. Despite claims of success by some cold laser therapy providers, available scientific evidence does not support claims that this is an effective method of helping people stop smoking.

## **Herbs and Supplements**

There is little scientific evidence to support the use of homeopathic aids and herbal supplements as stop-smoking methods. Because they are marketed as dietary supplements (as opposed to drugs), they don't need FDA approval to be sold. No dietary supplement has been proven to effectively help people quit smoking.

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**Source:** *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence Clinical Practice Guideline*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, June, 2000 and The American Cancer Society at <http://www.cancer.org>

*Iowa Department of Public Health, 2008*