

WHAT'S NEXT

Quitting is possible. In fact, today, there are more former smokers in Florida than current smokers. Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way offerings include phone, group, and web quit services available to Floridians in every county.

QUIT **YOUR** WAY

PHONE QUIT

GROUP QUIT

WEB QUIT

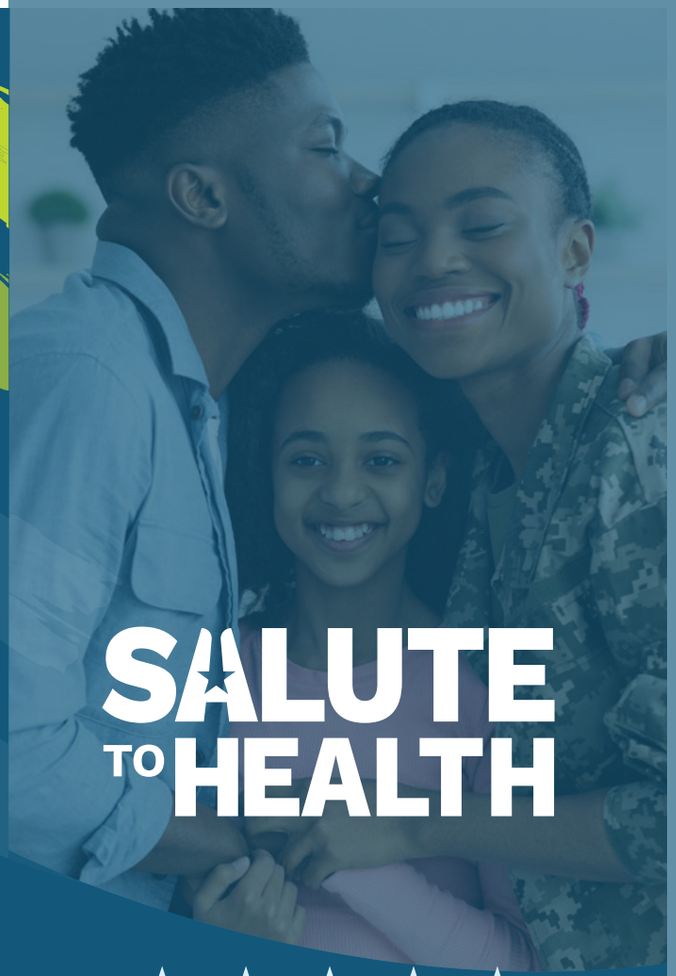
Quit Your Way programs can provide access to free 2-6 weeks of nicotine replacement therapies (NRT), including nicotine replacement patches, gum, or lozenges to help you quit, if medically appropriate and over 18 years of age.

Veterans may find they are most comfortable in Tobacco Free Florida's Group Quit. These sessions are available in person or virtually and led by a trained professional. It is a completely judgment-free zone focused on ways to quit, and is available all throughout Florida. In many locations, Group Quit sessions are also available in Spanish as well.

Visit TobaccoFreeFlorida.com
or call
1-877-U-CAN-NOW (877-822-6669)
to learn more about free quit tools and resources.

Scan the QR code to visit TobaccoFreeFlorida.com/Veterans

Florida HEALTH | Tobacco Free Florida .com



SALUTE TO HEALTH

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

THERE ARE SO MANY GOOD REASONS TO

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH

AND DECIDE IT'S TIME TO

QUIT TOBACCO ONCE AND FOR ALL.



WHERE WE ARE

Florida is home to the second-largest population of veterans in the country.

OVER **1.37** MILLION VETERANS call Florida home today.

Whether you served locally, across the country, or around the world, all veterans share one thing: the best step you can take for your health is to avoid tobacco—or quit if you use it.

Across the nation, about 1 in 5 veterans (20.9%) use tobacco products.

There are a lot of reasons why servicemen and servicewomen smoke. Thankfully, there are even more tools and resources to help you quit.

HOW WE GOT HERE

Many service members and veterans begin to smoke under the misconception that smoking reduces stress.

The truth is smoking **INCREASES** stress levels

Quitting can **LOWER THEM**

A study found tobacco companies sponsored more than 1,400 events reaching military personnel between 1981 and 2000.

- This included a wide variety of events at military bases, off-base bars and clubs that served military personnel, and at a series of local concerts.
- The tobacco industry has a long history of reaching military personnel as sources for potential customers. Documentation has established that the military was specifically selected by tobacco companies to promote use of these products through marketing strategies like sponsoring events.
- Many veterans who smoke were first exposed to the addictive products while in the service. Roughly 37% of military who smoke initiated after enlisting.
- You'll also often mistakenly hear tobacco use referred to as a "habit" – but this isn't the case either. Nicotine is a highly addictive chemical that works in your brain, and quitting may take several tries.



WHY IT MATTERS

There is no safe level of exposure to nicotine, and smoking is bad for your health. What you may not know is that it's especially damaging to the lives of our active duty and retired military.

- Service members who smoke exhibit lower productivity as compared to nonsmoking counterparts, miss more workdays, perform worse on fitness tests, and are more likely to be hospitalized.
- Smoking can worsen the pain of chronic health conditions many military personnel and veterans deal with, including back pain, headaches, rheumatoid arthritis, tooth and gum pain, and fibromyalgia.
- Tobacco use interferes with the effectiveness of many prescription medicines used to treat a wide range of mental health conditions. This can result in patients requiring stronger dosage levels of the medicines, which often have concerns including side effects and potential for addiction.
- People in Florida who smoke an average of one pack a day spend over $3,500 a year.
- When you quit smoking, after two weeks your lung function and circulation begin to improve. Over time your risk of lung cancer drops by half and your risk of coronary heart disease can be almost the same as a nonsmoker's.
- Another popular reason to quit is to be there for your family. People who quit:
  - Reduce the risk of exposing their family to secondhand smoke,
  - Have more energy,
  - Reduce the likelihood of their children becoming smokers,
  - Increase the chances of living longer.