



Australian Government

Department of Health
and Aged Care

**GIVE UP
FOR GOOD**

Case study

Sarah's quitting journey



Sarah is from Brisbane and works in the tertiary education sector. In her free time, she enjoys long distance running and working out, but that wasn't always the case.

Sarah started smoking at the age of 14 and finally quit at 41, with more than a few quit attempts along the way. She tried different methods to manage withdrawal symptoms and eventually found the quit support that worked best for her.

'I lost count how many times I tried quitting over 27 years, but it would have been at least 20 times. The most important thing for me was to keep trying to quit.'

Sarah started smoking to fit in socially, feeling the pressure to conform.

It was when she noticed a drop in her fitness that Sarah knew smoking was harming her health and that she needed to quit.

'I was actually very athletic at school. I was in the athletics team, and I would do long distance running and then all of a sudden, I discovered I couldn't run as fast or as far as I used to.'

'I was 15 when I first tried to quit. I had no idea that cigarettes were so addictive. I thought I'd just put them down and walk away, but then I realised it was going to be a long battle.'

Over the years, Sarah tried a range of methods to quit smoking, including therapy, gums, patches and lozenges,

and going cold turkey. She also contacted the Quitline for help and had the support of family and friends.

'The thing that I did most to support myself was to break the routines of smoking. I'd be in the routine of having a cigarette after a meal, after I got off the train, at the traffic lights, when out with friends – these were all little triggers.'

After several quit attempts Sarah sometimes questioned if she would ever be able to give up for good. The tipping point came when her son came home from school and asked if she was going to die because she smoked.

After promising her family that she would quit, Sarah spoke to her doctor, who prescribed a medication to reduce her cravings and withdrawal symptoms.

'The longest I ever lasted before was one year, but the cravings never went away. What finally worked was medication. It helped me quit and I haven't looked back.'

Since quitting, Sarah feels more energetic and has returned to regular sport. She's also more productive at work without the need for cigarette breaks.

'Quitting has improved my health and physical activity. It has also saved me a lot of money and improved my work practices as I don't need smoke breaks. Now my husband and I use the money we used to spend on cigarettes to travel instead.'

It's never too late to give up for good. Find the quit support that works for you. Visit quit.org.au, call Quitline on 13 7848, talk to a health professional or download the free My QuitBuddy app.



For more information visit

health.gov.au/GiveUpForGood

Quitline
13 7848