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## About Us

ICMS is a full service employee benefits consulting firm, utilizing creative and innovative solutions to assist clients in achieving greater value by increasing efficiencies, reducing cost, and enhancing employee productivity consistent with each client's unique culture.



# Innovative Cost Management Services, Inc. JANUARY 2015

## Hello, 2015!

Another year has come and gone already, and now that the holidays are behind us, we get to focus on ourselves! With the New Year come New Year's Resolutions, and as you would probably guess, one of the most popular resolutions made in the US is to quit smoking.<sup>1</sup> January is also National Blood Donor Month. In this month's newsletter, we'll provide some tips on Smoking Cessation as well as information about where you can donate blood and possibly help save a life!

## January is National Blood Donor Month<sup>1</sup>



January is the perfect time to honor the people who help others through the simple act of giving blood.

Since 1970, January has been known as National Blood Donor Month. It's a time when blood organizations like the American Red Cross pay tribute to the nearly 11 million people who give blood each year, and encourage others to start the New Year off right by coming to give the gift of life.

### Are You Eligible to Donate Blood?

Blood Donors Must:

- Be in good general health and feeling well\*
- Be at least 17-years-old in most states, or 16-years-old with parental consent if allowed by state law
- Weigh at least 110 pounds - Additional weight requirements apply for donors 18-years-old and younger and all high school donors

*\* Note: Healthy means that you feel well and can perform normal activities. If you have a chronic condition such as diabetes, healthy also means that you are being treated and the condition is under control. If you are not feeling well on the day of your donation you should reschedule.*

There are also many other eligibility requirements that must be met by donors, i.e. tattoos, medications, blood pressure, etc. Click [here](#) to view a full list of requirements listed alphabetically.

### How Often Can You Donate?

Donation Type	Donation Frequency
Blood (whole blood)	Every 56 days
Platelets	Every 7 days, up to 24 times/year
Plasma	Every 28 days, up to 13 times/year
Double Red Cells	Every 112 days, up to 3 times/year

Other aspects of each potential donor's health history are discussed as part of the donation process before any blood is collected. Each donor receives a brief examination during which temperature, pulse, blood pressure and hemoglobin (or hematocrit) are measured. To find a blood drive located near you, visit [www.redcross.org/blood](http://www.redcross.org/blood) and enter your zip code.



Sources: 1 American Red Cross <http://www.redcrossblood.org>

# 13 Tips to Quit Smoking<sup>2</sup>

## #1. Set a Quit Date

7-14 days from now.

## #2. Change Your Attitude

- Make a commitment - a firm decision that says, "I will quit smoking."
- Write a list of all the reasons why you want to quit. The reasons should be very personal and very important to you. Read this list every day.



## #3. Keep Track of When You Smoke

For at least one week write down on a sheet of paper every cigarette you smoke, what you are doing and how strong your desire is based on a scale of 1-5. You'll learn about your smoking triggers and this will help prepare for the fight ahead.

## #4. Behavior Changes

Practice these the week before you quit.

- Never smoke when you first get the urge. Wait 5 minutes.
- Keep cigarettes out of reach.
- Buy only one pack at a time.
- Cut down on the places you smoke.
- Switch brands.
- Start smoking later every day.
- Smoke fewer cigarettes every day.

## #5. The 6 "D's"

These are tips that help almost every quitter.

- DEEP breathe
- DRINK a lot of water
- DISTRACT yourself
- DIAL a friend
- DELAY
- DO physical activity

## #6. Withdrawal Symptoms

Common symptoms are headaches, sleeplessness, can't concentrate, cough, weight gain and feeling cranky, nervous and/or sad. Nicotine replacement therapy or Zyban can help. Speak to your doctor or pharmacist about what works best for you.

## #7. Make a Survival Kit

Your survival kit should include things that you can use as cigarette substitutes, like hard candy, mints, toothpicks, plastic straws, swizzle sticks, a stress ball or any small ball that you can squeeze when you feel stressed.

## #8. Quit Day

- Remove all cigarettes from car, home and work.
- Keep busy.
- Know your plan and do it.

## #9. Reward Yourself

You are going to have more money as an ex-smoker, use that money and buy something special for yourself. Give yourself positive strokes like "I'm proud of you."

## #10. Coping Skills

- Take naps
- Go easy on yourself
- Do relaxation exercises
- Plan something fun
- Read
- Stay away from caffeine

## #11. Cravings Last 1-3 Minutes

A craving will pass whether you smoke or not. Wait it out, it's only 3 minutes.

## #12. Caution

- Impatience - You can't hurry this process, but you can do things that help. Remind yourself how long you smoked and remember that your body is healing from cigarettes and that takes time.
- Pity-party - A little self-pity is actually comforting, but limit it to 10 minutes a day.

### #13. Beware the "Just One"

Even though you are moving ahead in the quitting process, you have to stay tuned in to that "little devil" inside of you who says, "Just one is okay." Talk back and say something like, "No thanks, I'm a non-smoker."

Sources: 2 Seton Health Center for Smoking Cessation, [www.quitsolutions.org](http://www.quitsolutions.org)



Got**Health**?

*Tip:* The volatile oils in ginger have long made it a useful herbal remedy for nasal and chest congestion. Pour 2 cups of boiling water over a 1-inch piece of peeled, grated ginger; steep for 10 minutes; and strain. Add a pinch or two of cayenne pepper to the water and drink as needed.