

My experience of stopping smoking using a vape (e-cigarette)

I have smoked at least twenty cigarettes a day since 1986. I stopped for almost a year from December 2016 until about November 2017. This was by far my most successful of many attempts, but used Champix (varenicline), which gave me twelve weeks of no sleep and extremely vivid dreams. I have also tried both the gum and patches which did not suit me.

I was in treatment for alcohol dependence at NTRP from May 2017 till October 2017, during which I started smoking again. I have been alcohol free since 23rd September 2017.

After restarting smoking I was incredibly dissatisfied with myself but as I was still in primary care and newly sober I was advised to continue and tackle the problem at a later date.


I was attending a computer course at NTRP, in April 2018, when I noticed the posters about stop smoking support. It was suggested by my councillors at Oaktrees that this may be a little too soon, but I was already fed up with smoking.

It wasn't the health part that motivated me, it was the cost. I'm on benefits and in constant worry about how I could afford cigarettes and pay my bills. In a way it had simply replaced alcohol. That realisation was particularly irksome.

There were hiccups in the start and it was difficult. There is more to smoking than the nicotine in the cigarette, if it was just the nicotine, then no problem. I wanted to quit smoking badly but my focus was on remaining sober. Therefore I used both cigarettes and a vape (electronic cigarette), although cutting down on the cigarettes drastically.

I used the Strive vape, but had some problems with the battery not lasting long enough. After some searching I found another supplier online, and bought additional batteries.

I can't give an exact date I bought the last packet of cigarettes, I estimate six weeks, possibly two months ago. What I can state with the utmost confidence is that Tabasco sauce is suddenly VERY hot, the same with Iceland's Indian chicken meals!



Although I'm on benefits as noted before, the money in my account is actually increasing. Not by a lot, I won't be booking any Caribbean holidays quite yet, but the incessant drain on my finances has stopped abruptly.

Walking up the street last week I suddenly could smell the plants in a garden I was passing. This may seem insignificant, but when that happened last year I stopped dead in my tracks, it's very strange to smell things after smoking for 32 years. After a break it was wonderful to smell it again.

I'm quite overweight and started walking to lose some of the excess, not a lot of walking but a bit. Yesterday I went with a group to Beamish, walked around for four hours. After being dropped in Gateshead I got to the bus stop to see both of the buses I could take disappearing in the distance. Thought nothing of it and started walking. Halfway home I realised what I was doing and that my breathing was deep and unlaboured. That was a surprise I was not expecting. I'm not doing the Great North Run though.

I may not have followed the rules to the letter, but certainly did in spirit and it's a massive step in the right direction for me. The vape unit I used may not be the best, but I don't have the experience to really compare products. I'm off cigarettes - the required result. A very difficult, if not nearly impossible task for me in the past. Thank you.