

Addiction to smoking

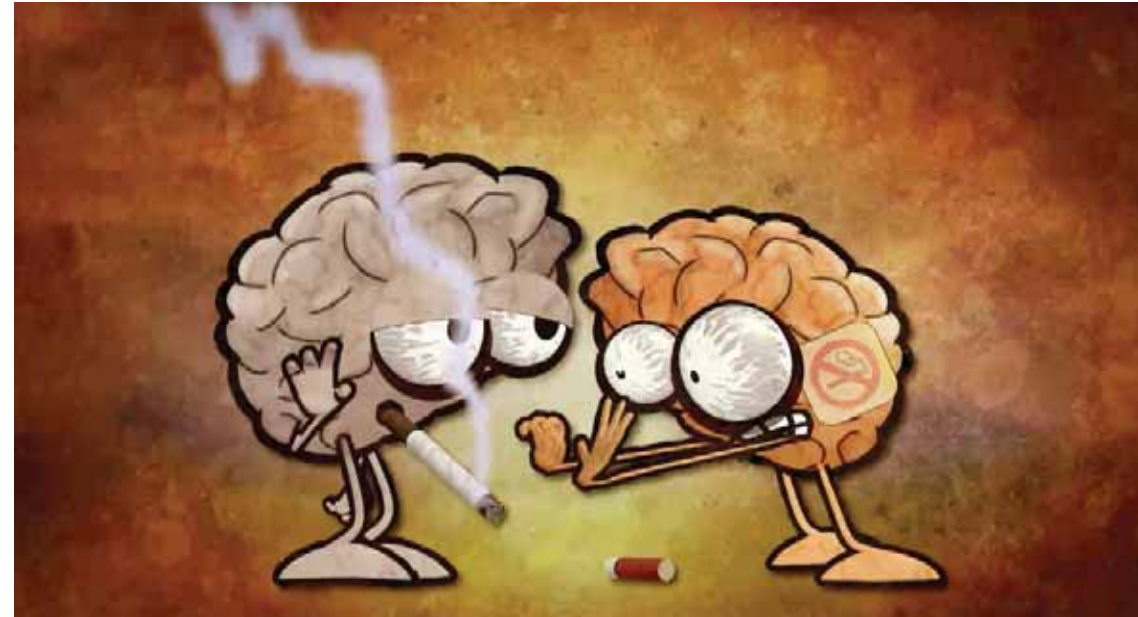
- When you smoke, the brain makes a lot more dopamine than it needs.
- This can make you feel very good for a short time. It may even help you concentrate and have more energy.
- But when people smoke cigarettes for a long time, the brain starts to think it needs even more dopamine to make it happy. This means smokers want to smoke more and only another smoke will make them feel better.
- This is called **addiction** or getting **addicted** to cigarettes.
- Being addicted to cigarettes means that people can't stop smoking, even when they know it is not good for them. This can make them sick and can even kill them.
- **Addiction** is a powerful thing. It can force the brain to make decisions that are unhealthy, like smoking cigarettes.
- That's why it's important to help the brain to remember how to be happy and healthy, without cigarettes.
- Quitting smoking can help the brain and body feel happy and healthy again.
- There are lots of ways the brain can remember how to be happy without cigarettes.



When you smoke, the brain makes a lot more dopamine than it needs.

Withdrawal happens when you quit

- To quit smoking, it is necessary to break the addiction. This is hard because the brain feels like it needs the nicotine from cigarettes to feel good. It has forgotten how to feel good without cigarettes.
- When someone stops smoking, they feel bad for awhile because the brain and body are missing the cigarettes. This is called **withdrawal** (from nicotine). The brain has forgotten how to make dopamine on its own and it's like the brain is screaming for more cigarettes.
- This can be painful and can make people go back to smoking even though they want to quit. This is because the **withdrawal** is very hard.
- These are some of the things that can happen in **withdrawal**.
 - **Cravings:** a strong desire or urge to smoke again. All you can think about is having another cigarette.
 - **Change in feelings:** you might start to feel cranky, angry, frustrated, anxious, sad and even depressed. You may even find it hard to concentrate, become restless, and not be able to sit still for very long.
 - **Changes in the way you sleep:** you may start waking up more at night and not sleep as well after quitting.
 - **Weight gain/getting fat:** you may start eating more food than before and putting on weight.
- The good news is that the **withdrawal** gets easier as time goes by. To quit smoking it is important to get past the **withdrawal**, and let the brain learn to make dopamine, (the feel good chemical) on its own again.



When someone stops smoking, they feel bad for awhile because the brain and body are missing the cigarettes.

This is called **withdrawal** (from nicotine).

The brain has forgotten how to make dopamine on its own and it's like the brain is screaming for more cigarettes.